

Town of Georgina

Waterfront Parks Master Plan

What We Heard Report #2

November 2020



Introduction

The Town of Georgina is preparing a Waterfront Parks Master Plan to establish a vision and framework for implementation and direction for operations and management for Georgina's waterfront parks. The Waterfront Parks Master Plan is being done in three parts, with the first part approved by Council. The first part focuses on parks along the south shore of Lake Simcoe:

Zone 1: Willow Beach

Zone 2: Franklin Beach Conservation Area & De La Salle Park

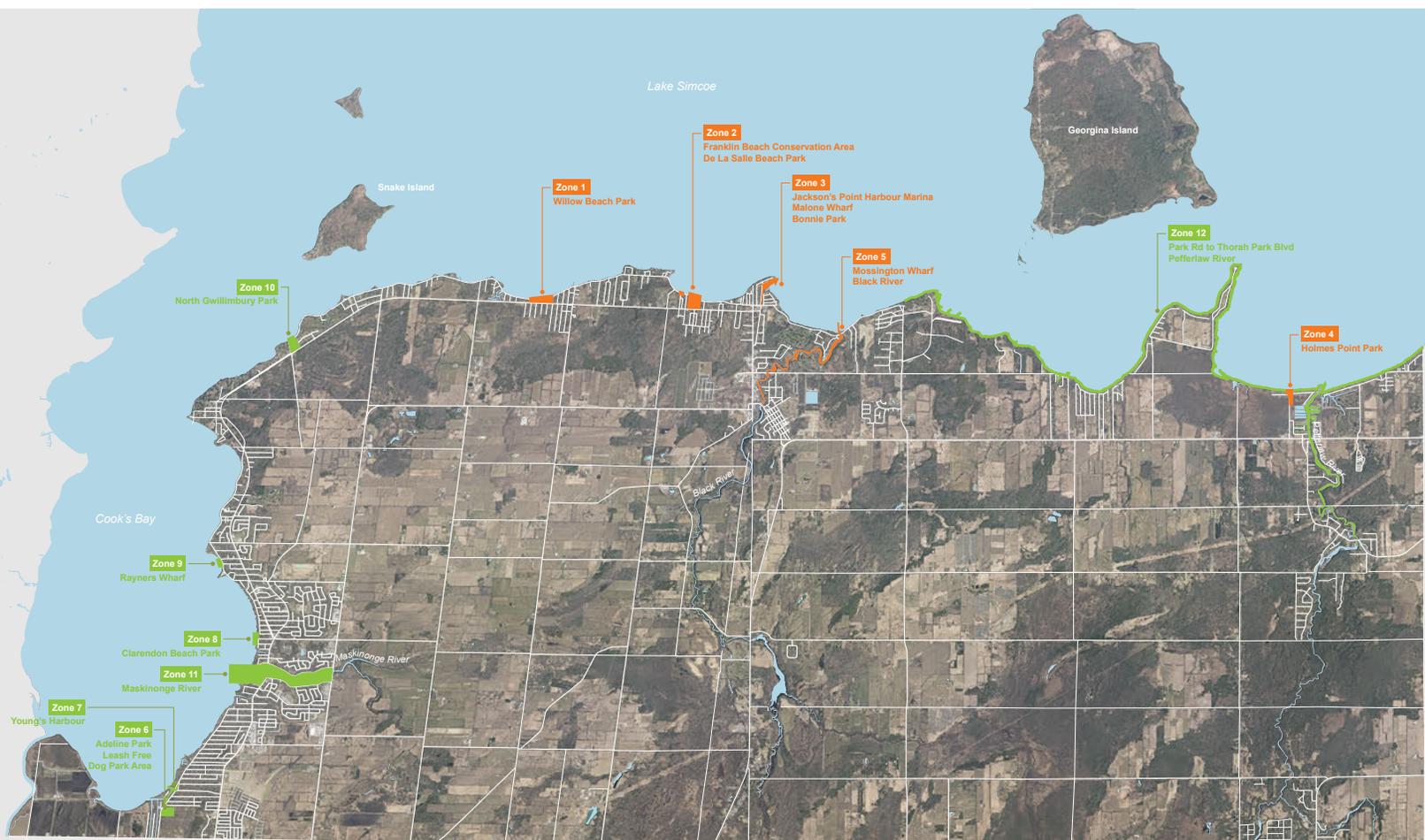
Zone 3: Jackson's Point Harbour Marina, Malone Wharf & Bonnie Park

Zone 4: Holmes Point Park

Zone 5: Mossington Wharf & Black River to Sutton

The Waterfront Parks Master Plan is in the second stage of the Master Plan when the team is seeking input on initial concepts being explored for each of the park zones.

This document provides a summary of what we've heard during a series of on-line meetings for each one of the waterfront parks held on November 21 and 22, 2020 using the GOTO meeting platform. Approximately 80 people in total joined the 6 on-line meetings. Each meeting was recorded and posted to the project web page on the Town of Georgina's website.



Zone 1 Willow Beach Park

The following is a summary of comments:

Lake Drive and Parking

- Support for closing Lake Drive and redirecting traffic to two new park driveways. Traffic operations will be clarified to confirm the needs for stop signs/lights at Metro Road
- Will require signage and bike traffic calming measures to ensure cyclists reduce speed through the Park
- Will clarify how emergency vehicles will access the park
- Suggest that parking be accessed from Metro Road only
- Suggest signs to advise motorists that Lake Drive in this area is for local access only and divert traffic to Metro Road east and west of the park
- Suggest allocating the parking lot at the west edge of the Park for residents only, at least until noon on weekends, after which it could be available for other visitors

Beach

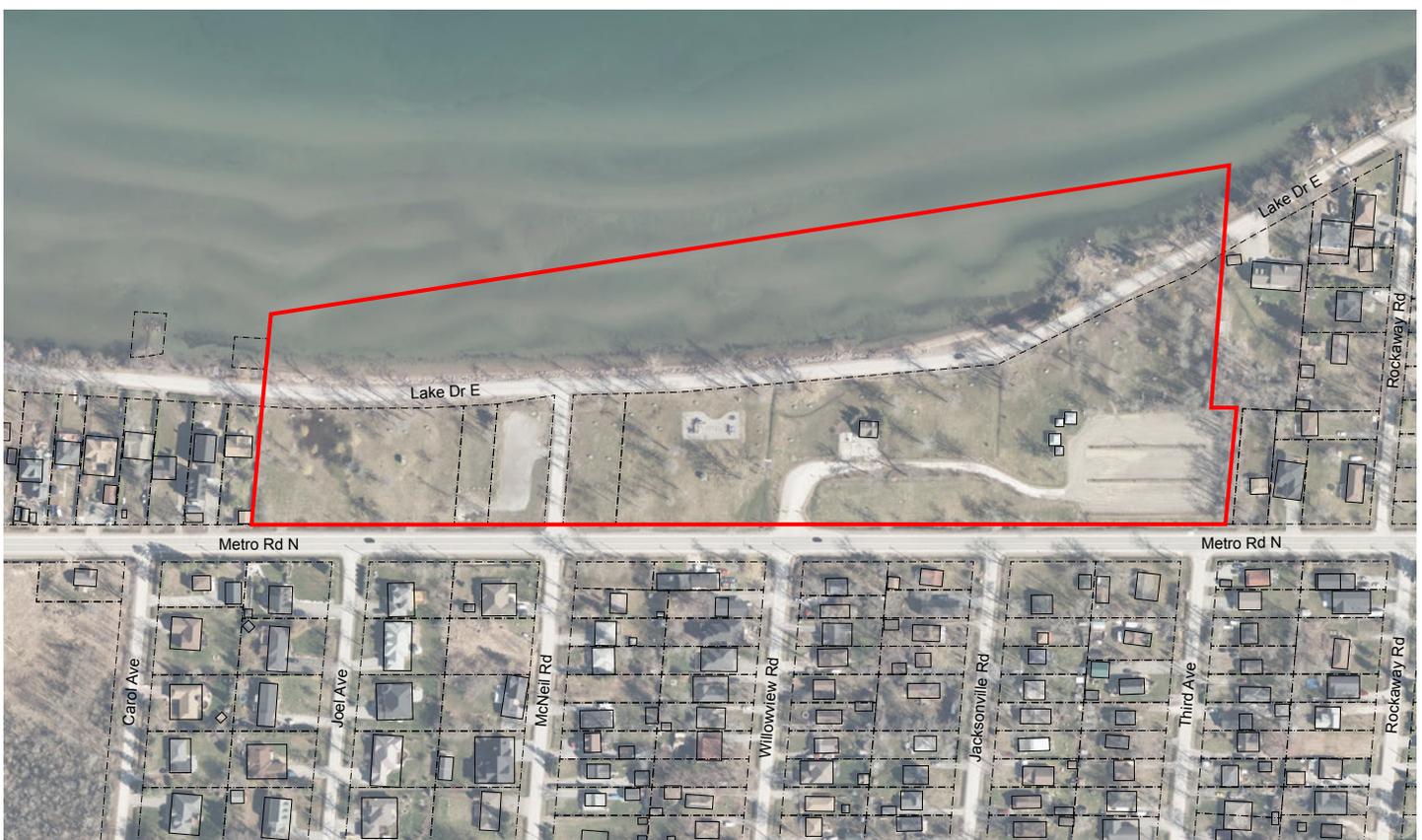
- Support for increasing the size of the beach “honouring the greatest asset of the Park”
- Support for the new washrooms being multi-purpose, with change rooms, heated to enable winter use

Sewage Treatment Plant

- Need to follow up with measures to eliminate the odour from the sewage treatment facility in the park

Park Use/Landscape

- Interest in planting willow trees and shrubs and strong support for improving the drainage
- Will clarify how the park is used for snow machines, ice fishing, kiteboarding, skating trail in the park or on the lake,
- Would be ideal if an area for kiteboarding could be kept clear of furnishings



Zone 2 Franklin Beach CA & De La Salle Park

Franklin Beach CA

The following is a summary of comments:

- Need a defined sidewalk to link Franklin Beach to De LaSalle Park
- Support for demarcating Lake Drive to indicate shared road, slow down, pedestrian space
- Support for “park to park” signage, perhaps in collaboration with the Georgina Heritage Society
- Suggestions for a skating trail
- Support for facilities to support public use, in particular washrooms
- Confirmation that this is a popular location for snowmobilers who unload machines and park along the lake edge
- Interest in designating a part of the park as residents only
- Discussion of parking, however, not interested in giving up part of green space for parking. Enhanced signage and enforcement to restrict parking on local streets.



De La Salle Park

The following is a summary of comments:

Lake Drive and Parking

- The new park driveway as illustrated on the sketch is intended to be a narrow, tree-lined park drive. The location diverts the cars away from the beach and enables the park and beach to be connected with pedestrians given priority. Keeping the new driveway in the park, avoids impact on adjacent residential streets. There was concern regarding the amount of space given to a new driveway, the loss of sports fields and the result of separating park space on the west and east edges
- Concern about the impact of additional traffic on the adjacent residential streets if Lake Drive was closed seasonally with “dead ends” at west and east edge of the Park
- Suggestions for a new park driveway on the east edge of the park and to redirect traffic to Salvation Army Road to access Metro Road and the parking
- Support for adding a sidewalk on Lake Drive and enhanced signage to bring pedestrians from Jackson's Point to De La Salle

Park Use

- Suggestions for improvements to the playground should ensure it is still accessible, a key component of this Park
- A pier was suggested for the shoreline along the grassy area and a submerged reef to attract snorklers
- Will clarify how the park can be used in the winter, suggestions included a skating rink on the lake, wing skating, wing skiing. Need for porta potties or year round access to washrooms
- Suggestions to explore partnerships for benches, trees, use of the Chapel, etc.

Zone 3 Jackson's Point, Malone Wharf & Bonnie Park

The following is a summary of comments:

Items that can be added/clarified on the emerging concept

- Seasonal washrooms at Malone Wharf
- Corrected location of the water treatment building, illustrate opportunity to enhance the appearance of the building
- Night sky lighting
- Sustainable/naturalized landscape planting to enhance the natural features of the location
- Launch area for canoes and kayaks
- Boardwalk on the breakwater
- Option for an additional swimming area at Malone Wharf
- Opportunities to encourage birders (a separate area, interpretive information) and people snorkeling that use Malone Wharf
- Demarcated area for swimming at the beach
- Use of the York Region Police lands re: boat storage, parking, office use, protocols to keep water open etc.
- Fee for boat launching
- Delete privately-owned property from the study area if not included in the concept design
- Location for accessible parking

Cost/budget/phasing of the improvements

- Order of magnitude costs of improvements will be estimated when there is clear direction on a preferred concept
- No budget has been assigned for the capital improvements
- Phasing/timing of improvements will be determined once a preferred direction is confirmed and order of magnitude costs are estimated
- Implementation will be determined within the context of all waterfront parks
- Potential partners/volunteers will be identified with a preferred direction

Parking

- The Town-owned land between Jackson's Point Avenue and Lorne can accommodate approx. 16 cars/trailers or approx. 30 cars
- There was a suggestion that the Town consider purchasing additional property adjacent to the lot to accommodate additional parking
- As an option to the concept illustrated, the channel side of the driveway to the marina could accommodate about 35 cars if the tree/landscape planting as shown on the illustration is removed
- With marina expansion to 79 slips, the team recommends that approximately 20% (16 slips) be set aside as transient slips and 63 for seasonal slip holders.
- With the 54 slip marina, there are about 40 parking spaces in Bonnie Park (approximately 0.75 spaces/slip). With a potential for 63 seasonal slips in an expanded marina, about 48 parking spaces would be required

Boat Launch

- The ramp as illustrated on the concepts accommodates boats up to 35' and is approx. 6 m wide

Clarification on the Malone Wharf Boat Launch:

- According to the team's coastal engineer, the alignment of the boat launch could be established to avoid impact from the breakwater that will provide some level of shelter for the launch. Dredging may also be required
- The illustration of the launch shows that a narrow pedestrian walkway and a shelter could be accommodated on the Wharf with a boat launch

Opinions shared regarding the three boat launch locations:

- Malone Wharf: preferred because there would be less conflict with the marina and beach; could construct a dock for tie up, traffic would be kept separate from Bonnie Park ; if launch

located here, need to protect underwater heritage rail; very rough in this location

- Malone Wharf not preferred because there's no place to park and it's too far from parking in the harbour, would be in conflict with people birding and snorkeling in this location, the breakwater will make the boat launch not feasible
- Harbour: Must be in the harbour, can co-exist with the beach, according to some there's been no issues in the past
- Harbour: Must be in the harbour, but it cannot co-exist with the beach
- The Launch must be in the channel, it was suggested that Council renegotiate with York Region Police. To clarify, this would only be possible if the Town purchased the Unexus lands
- some feel that a boat launch is not needed in Jackson's Point

Town purchase of Unexus property

- It was suggested that the Town purchase the property
- If this land was purchased, it was suggested that the boat launch to be located at the end of the channel, and away from the beach

Opinions regarding beach

- Leave the beach, not a deck
- A boat launch in the harbour would ruin the beach, there are other boat launches close by. Do not include a boat launch in the harbour

Marina

- The marina expansion as illustrated allows unimpeded access to the channel for YRP and the private boat houses on the channel. The gas and pump out will be evaluated when the preferred concept is confirmed. Opinions regarding the marina expansion:

- Cannot expand as shown on illustration as it conflicts with York Region Police Unit, blocks existing boat houses and will require negotiation for use of water lots not owned by the Town, nothing to draw people to Jackson's Point
- Need to expand – there's a demand for more slips, opportunity to attract transient boaters
- Marina – demand is primarily smaller boats
- Marina expansion as illustrated extends the channel
- Possible partnership with Ramada to accommodate additional transient slips
- Underestimating amount of boat/traffic and the impact on the Park

Study Area

- The purpose of a master planning exercise is to deal with potential change in an area. When a study area boundary is delineated, it considers the areas that have the least and most potential for change. In Jackson's Point, privately owned residential lands are excluded. Public land and lands owned by Unexus are included to understand the potential of these lands abutting the harbour and to show how harbour and park design is not contingent on these lands.



Zone 4 Holmes Point Park

The following is a summary of comments:

Items that can be revised on the next iteration of the concept

- move the winter access to the lake to the central area of the park
- Ensure a hard surface access to the lake for unloading snowmachines
- Reconfigure the road to include a drop off zone and turn around at the park
- Area calculations for various components of the park
- Type and area for shoreline protection works

Management/operations of the park

- The team is reviewing management and operations of the parks, that in part is influenced by the preferred direction for each park and will be reporting out on recommendations for management and operations at the next round of public consultation
- Changes in the management and operations of the park could be implemented in advance of capital improvements in the park
- There was interest in this park being identified for residents only. The team will confirm with the Town whether this is an option to be considered
- Consider creating an app to make it easier to contact by-law enforcement or installing webcams in the parking lot so people can see when it's full
- Some suggested the need for better signage to deal with specific issues such as people dumping charcoal



Support for managing the capacity of the park

- To clarify, this would require some form of fencing/screen at the road edge with a gate through which the number of people could be monitored. The fence/screen would require removal in the fall/winter to enable access to the lake by snow machines
- The area of the park between the road and the water's edge is 0.91 hectares (approx. 2.2 acres) or 9,100 m². This includes the area of the current playground. The Ministry of Natural Resources uses a rule of thumb of 6.4 m²/person to understand capacity for beaches. The team will undertake to determine an estimate of a capacity for the park and clarify what is required to monitor capacity (e.g. fencing, gate, staff and security). The team will include precedents from other municipalities who are monitoring capacity and charging fees to enter in order to pay for additional staff and security.

Traffic and parking

- There was interest in keeping a turnaround for vehicles to easily turn around at the park if parking is full
- It was suggested that signage at Highway 48 could notify people that the parking lot is full or the park is at capacity
- There is currently approx. 40 parking spaces in the lot. The concept illustrates doubling the size of the parking area
- It was suggested that additional parking is required. Others suggested that the current parking supply helps to limit people using the park
- There was interest in adding something to Holmes Point Road to slow traffic. A number of suggestions were made by the team including speed bumps and changing the surface of the road
- The current parking lot generated approximately \$46,000 in 2019, \$50,000 in 2018
- Some suggested a need for residents only parking and noted the land west of Holmes Point Road could be used. The team clarified that the Conservation Authority notes this area is wet and they do not want to use it for parking.

- It was suggested that like other areas in Georgina, speed should be reduced to 30 km/hr on roads to the park and tow-away zones should be identified
- Need a drop off zone for families
- Parking is licensed to a private fish hut rental business January 1 to March 31. Provide a cleanup/damage deposit to ensure annual cleanup is completed by April 15th each year.

Washroom

- Clarification on the servicing; it is not anticipated that permanent washrooms would have municipal services. A report is going to Council regarding upgrading portable toilets with enhanced management while the exploration of a longer term solution for a permanent washroom can be confirmed
- The capital cost for a permanent washroom will be included when order of magnitude costs are estimated for the preferred concept for the park
- It was suggested that the washroom be reoriented from that illustrated on the concept

Shoreline

- The coastal engineer on our team confirms that the shoreline is eroding and that some effort has been made to protect the shoreline with armour stone, however there is no filter fabric behind the stone resulting in a failure of the efforts. We will explore options with the Conservation Authority and include shoreline protection on the next iteration of the concept

Park Use

- The park should accommodate kiteboarders/wind surfing
- Designate an area for disabled access to water
- Designate an area for seniors with railing into water
- Don't remove trees
- Create a specific area for barbecues

Zone 5 Mossington Wharf/Black River

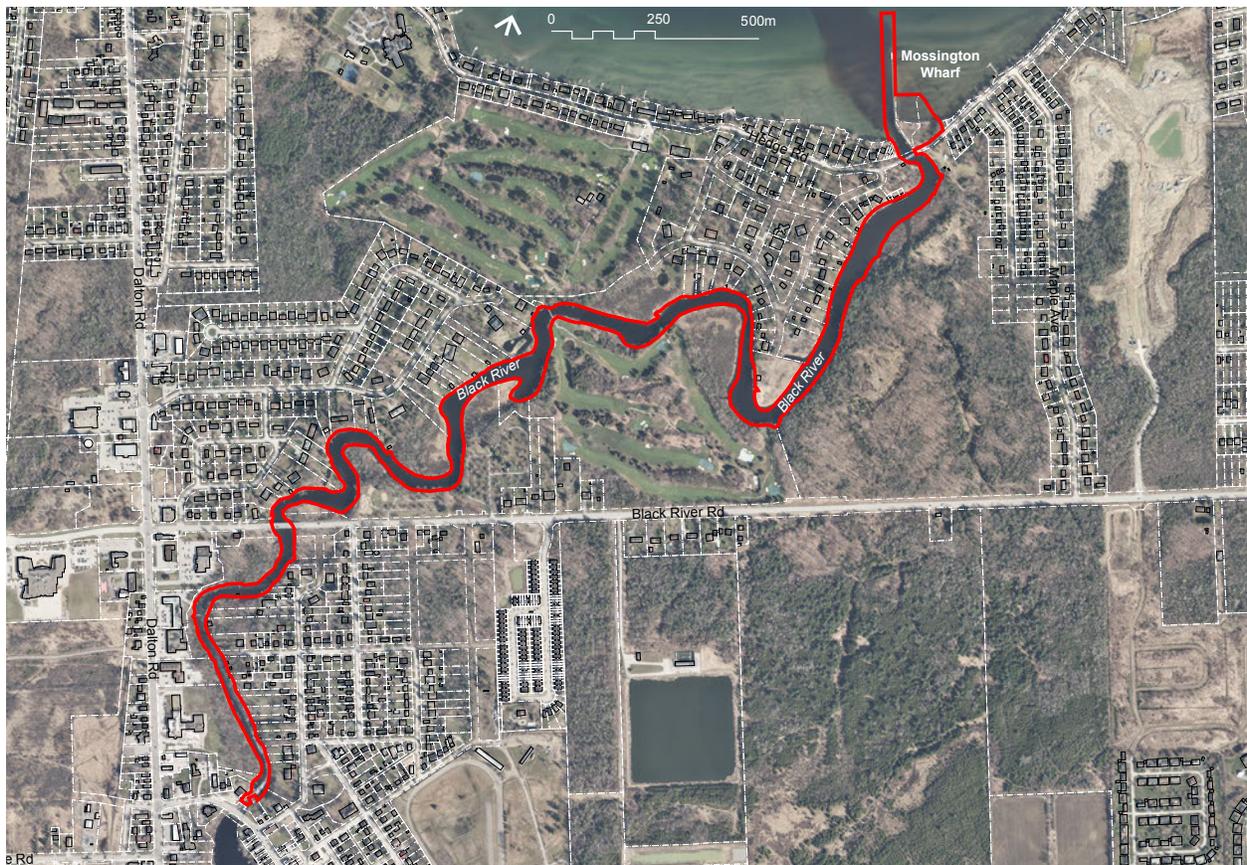
The following is a summary of comments:

Wharf

- If the option was selected to keep the wharf for boaters only, will be difficult to keep others from crossing private land to get to the wharf.
- Dismantle and remove the wharf
- Wharf should be removed to eliminate attraction to use because there's no facilities
- Dredging required is a result of the wharf – if removed, may not require further dredging
- It was noted that the river edge could be accessible in Sutton and that a linked trail system was explored in the past
- Great destination for quiet, small boats
- Consider opportunities for winter tourism – skating on the river

Black River

- Concerned about the impact of additional boat traffic in the Black River on natural heritage features
- Kayak trip up the river is gorgeous
- Concern that dredging will result in the opportunity for louder and bigger boats
- New Park
- Some supported the idea of adding parkland that is environmentally sensitive, assuming there are no implications on private property
- Concerned about the impacts from snowmobiles and noise
- A park in this location will require another level of oversight because it's out of the way
- If land is acquired there will be a chance to manage use



- Many expressed concern with parking added in this area due to limitations in Hedge Road and the bridge
- Some noted the opportunity to integrate possible park development with bigger development interests– perhaps a lease arrangement could be explored with owners
- Even if wharf is kept, with no park, will need portable washrooms
- Great spot for naturalists, area for quiet recreation
- Some expressed an opinion that money would be better spent in other locations as purchasing land at the mouth of river will be expensive
- Switch to more family oriented activities in a new park
- Work with a college to explore opportunities for a Water Research Centre

Mill Pond Park

- Strong support for a dock at Mill Pond park
- Check into road ends near Mill Pond Park for additional opportunities to launch a small boat

Hedge Road and Bridge

- Bridge is an historically designated structure – cannot be widened
- Sidewalks along Hedge Road, extension to bridge for pedestrians and bicycles to make it safer to walk and cycle along the waterfront
- Bridge restricts large boats from accessing the river

The Link

- Town owned, could be an access point for canoes/kayaks, with launch, accessible at Mill Pond
- Gem of the town that's a hidden treasure
- Ladies of Lake would likely support improvements at Link: more people have

access to the River, more people would be stewards to keep it in good shape

- Black River behind commercial uses is where the rear lots are littered with shopping carts and garbage

Designation of lands along the River

- The team confirms that the privately-owned lands along the east side of the River are designated as “Environmental Protection Area” and “New Residential Area” in the Sutton/Jackson’s Point Secondary Plan



PLAN B Natural Heritage
Baird
TOURISTICS
SCS Consulting Group