



# Port Colborne **East Waterfront Community Improvement Plan** and Secondary Plan

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**URBAN  
STRATEGIES  
INC .**



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

Port Colborne is a historic community tied closely to the industries that developed along the Welland Canals. Industrial activity continues on both sides of the canal in the heart of the city. But on the east side, across from the downtown, major employers of the past have departed or, in the case of Inco (now Vale), significantly reduced the scale of their operations. The consequence for the community on the east side has been severe economic and physical decline compounded by large parcels of vacant, post-industrial land.

This Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is an important step and tool to renewing the environment of Port Colborne's East Village and Waterfront. Its purpose is to guide and encourage physical improvements to the area by:

- a. Illustrating a long-term vision for the East Waterfront;
- b. Identifying improvements to the public realm, including streets and open spaces;
- c. Setting out policies and guidelines for new development and infrastructure in the area;
- d. Establishing a program of incentives to encourage improvements to private property and other investments in the area; and,
- e. Identifying other strategies, including potential funding sources and partnerships, that can assist in implementing recommended improvements in the East Waterfront.

## 1.2 Planning Process

Recognizing the opportunities for improvements across its harbour and central waterfront, in 2003, the City of Port Colborne initiated a Waterfront Revitalization Strategy for the area stretching from H.H. Knoll Lakeview Park to Reuter Road. A team of consultants led by Urban Strategies Inc. undertook a number of technical studies of the area and engaged stakeholders in discussions about its future. The technical studies and community visioning confirmed that the most pressing need and greatest opportunities for revitalization are on the east side of the Welland Canal.

The City initiated discussions with Transport Canada and the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation on the future of the under-utilized industrial lands adjacent to the canal. The City also initiated preparation of a Community Improvement Plan for the city's brownfields, i.e., abandoned, vacant, derelict, idled or underutilized property with an active potential for redevelopment, but where redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination. A CIP applicable to all brownfields within the City, including those on the east side of the canal, was adopted in 2009. Early in 2011, the City reached a tentative agreement in principle, subject to ratification by City Council, with Transport Canada and the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation on the canal-side lands. The Seaway would retain control over the first approximately 300 feet of land on the east side, and land beyond 300 feet could be planned for other uses provided there are no impacts on navigational aids.

With a tentative agreement on the future of canal-side lands, the City initiated further visioning and planning for the "East Waterfront" in March 2011. With assets such as Lakeview Park, Sugarloaf Marina, the West Street Promenade and several canal-related industrial uses, Port Colborne's "West Waterfront" is relatively stable and vital. The greatest opportunities for change and improvement on the west side are in the Downtown. This area was the subject of a separate Community Improvement Plan Study, which concluded with

adoption of the Downtown Central Business District CIP in September 2010.

In April 2011, a Community Visioning Workshop was held to gather input and discuss the opportunities and challenges for improving the East Waterfront. This resulted in community goals and a preferred long-term vision that were presented at public open houses held in June and July 2011. Draft incentive programs were subsequently discussed at a consultation session involving community representatives held in September 2011. Feedback from the community and City staff throughout the planning process has informed this CIP.



BREAK-OUT SESSION AT THE 2011 VISIONING WORKSHOP

## 1.3 What is a Community Improvement Plan?

Ontario's Planning Act allows municipalities to designate an area as a community improvement project area and prepare a community improvement plan if, in the opinion of the council, the improvement of the area "is desirable because of age, dilapidation, overcrowding, faulty arrangement, unsuitability of buildings or for any other environmental, social or community economic development reason." Community improvement is defined as "the planning or replanning, design or redesign, resubdivision, clearance, development or redevelopment, construction, reconstruction and rehabilitation, improvement of energy efficiency, or any of them, of a community improvement project area, and the provision of such residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, institutional, religious, charitable or other uses, buildings, structures, works, improvements or facilities, or spaces therefor, as may be appropriate or necessary."

CIPs are shaped by local needs, priorities and circumstances. A community improvement approach is a flexible, comprehensive, coordinated and strategic framework for dealing with lands and buildings. Through community improvement plans municipalities can:

- Focus public attention on local priorities and municipal initiatives;
- Target areas in transition or in need of repair, rehabilitation, redevelopment and restructuring;
- Facilitate and encourage community change in a coordinated manner;
- Stimulate private sector investment through municipal incentive-based programs; and,
- Direct public resources toward implementation of municipal planning policies.

Under an adopted and approved CIP, municipalities may:

- Acquire, hold, clear, grade or otherwise prepare land for community improvement activities;
- Construct, repair, rehabilitate or improve buildings on land acquired or held by it in the community improvement project area in conformity with the CIP;
- Sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land acquired or held by it in the community improvement project area to any person or governmental authority for use in conformity with the CIP;
- Make grants or loans, in conformity with the community improvement plan, to registered owners, assessed owners and tenants of lands and buildings within the community improvement project area, and to any person to whom such an owner or tenant has assigned the right to receive a grant or loan, to pay for the whole or any part of the eligible costs of the CIP.

The scope and authority of a CIP can be quite broad. Most recently, they have become a common tool for helping to revitalize downtown/commercial areas and areas containing brownfields through a range of incentives.

*A CIP typically balances the public improvements desired for an area with a range of incentives intended to stimulate private investments.*



# Aerial Photograph of the East Village and Waterfront

 Community Improvement Project Area Boundary

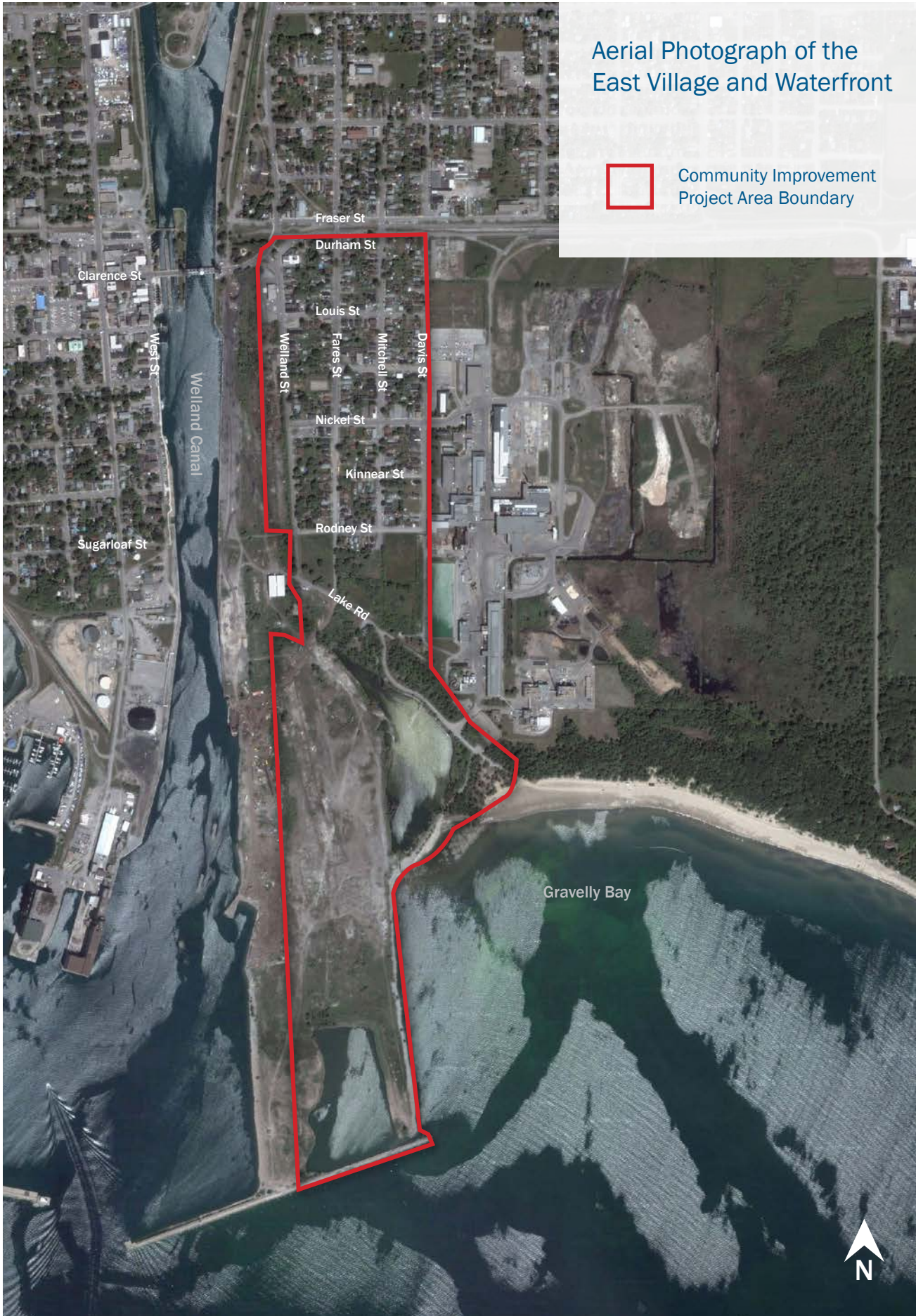


FIGURE 1: THE EAST WATERFRONT COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT AREA

## 1.4 The Project Area

Figure 1 identifies the East Waterfront Community Improvement Project Area. Its general boundaries are Durham Street to the north, the western edge of the Inco Vale property to the east and Lake Erie to the south. To the west, the boundary is a line running roughly parallel to the Welland Canal, approximately 91 metres (300 feet) from the edge of the canal, excluding the occupied portion of the Hamilton Marine property at the bottom of Welland Street.

As discussed in Section 2.7 of this document, the City's Official Plan, through Official Plan Amendment (OPA) 83, establishes criteria for designating Community Improvement Project Areas and provides guidance for the preparation of CIPs.

*Based on the assessment of existing conditions contained in Section 3 of this document, the area delineated in Figure 1 satisfies the criteria for designation as a Community Improvement Project Area.*







## 2 Policy Context

Land use changes and physical improvements in the East Waterfront are subject to a range of Provincial, Regional and municipal policies. This Community Improvement Plan has been informed by all relevant land use policies and guidelines. This section summarizes the most relevant policies, with bolded text indicating key policies that shaped the recommendations of the plan.

### 2.1 Provincial Policy Statement

The current Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), adopted in 2005, is intended to provide policy direction to municipalities regarding land use and development matters of provincial interest. Under Section 3 of the Planning Act, official plans, community improvement plans and other municipal decisions on planning matters *shall be consistent with* the PPS.

The overarching goals of the PPS are to ensure long-term prosperity, environmental health and social well-being for all Ontarians. The policies emphasize the efficient use of land, environmental protection and the creation of liveable, healthy communities. Section 1.1.3 promotes the vitality and regeneration of settlement areas and opportunities for intensification and redevelopment. Land use patterns shall be based on densities and a mix of land uses that efficiently use land, resources, infrastructure and public service facilities.

Regarding employment areas, such as those in the East Waterfront, the PPS states that they may be converted to non-employment uses through a comprehensive review by the municipality that demonstrates the land is not required for employment purposes over the long term and that there is a need for the conversion.

**Section 1.5 of the PPS states that healthy, active communities should be promoted by:**

- **planning public streets, spaces and facilities to be safe, meet the needs of pedestrians, and facilitate walking and other non-motorized movement;**
- **providing for a full range of settings for recreation, including parkland, trails and, where practical, water-based resources;**
- **providing opportunities for public access to shorelines.**

**Section 1.7 states that long-term economic prosperity should be supported by, among other actions, planning so that major transportation facilities (like the Welland Canal) and sensitive land uses, including residential, are appropriately designed, buffered and/or separated from each other to prevent adverse effects from odour, noise and other contaminants, and to minimize risk to public health and safety. Opportunities for sustainable tourism development are also encouraged.**

## 2.2 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe was adopted in 2006 under the Places to Grow Act. The purpose of the Growth Plan is to provide the framework to manage growth and build stronger, prosperous communities in the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which includes the Niagara Region, to 2031. The policies of the Growth Plan focus on directing growth to built-up areas, promoting transit supportive densities and a healthy mix of residential and employment land uses, preserving employment areas for future economic opportunities, and enhancing the conservation of natural systems and prime agricultural areas, among other objectives. Beyond the plan's growth management and intensification policies, the policies most relevant to the East Waterfront are those dealing with employment lands and natural systems.

Section 2.2.6 states that municipalities will promote economic development and competitiveness by, among other strategies, planning for, protecting and preserving employment areas for current and future uses. Conversion of lands in employment areas to non-employment uses only through a municipal comprehensive review where it has been demonstrated that:

- there is a need for the conversion;
- allocated employment forecasts for the municipality will be met;
- the conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area
- there is existing or planned infrastructure to accommodate the conversion;
- the lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they were designated.

**Section 4.2.1, regarding natural systems, encourages the development of systems of publicly accessible parkland, open space and trails, including shoreline areas.**

## 2.3 Regional Niagara Policy Plan

The Regional Niagara Policy Plan provides direction on land use decisions to the 12 municipalities within the Niagara Region. Section 3 describes seven objectives for Development and Conservation. Among the objectives relevant to the East Waterfront, the Policy Plan articulates the desire to balance both urban development and the conservation of natural resources; facilitate and maintain a pattern of distinctive and identifiable urban communities; preserve and enhance the ecological processes and life-support systems essential for sustaining human well-being and the health of the natural environment; improve regional self-reliance through long-range economic development; and undertake and support those activities which improve the quality of life for the Niagara community.

Section 4 of the plan contains objectives and policies relating to the promotion of economic development and tourism. **Of particular relevance to the East Waterfront are Policies 4.A.5, and 4.A.6, which support development of the Welland Canals East Side Trail and encourage the City of Port Colborne and the Region to work together to establish the routes for the Greater Niagara Circle Route and the Trans Canada Trail through the city.** Policy 4.C.1 encourages local municipalities to identify and provide for high quality tourism-related development and redevelopment opportunities within existing urban areas that are compatible with and respect the distinctive character of the communities. Policy 4.C.7 recognizes the Regional role in encouraging local municipalities to nurture tourism by protecting cultural and heritage features and resources through mechanisms such as Secondary Plans and Community Improvement Plans.

The Policy Plan locates the East Waterfront in an Urban Area, and Policy 5.5 recognizes that local municipalities have primary responsibility for regulating land uses in Urban Areas. It also identifies portions of the lakefront and the entrance to the canal as Environmental Conservation Areas and Shoreline. **The policies regarding shorelines state that public access to Niagara's shorelines shall be maintained or enhanced (7.A.5.2) and the Region shall support public acquisition of property along Niagara's shorelines for environmental and recreational purposes (7.A.5.3).**

## 2.4 Regional Policy Plan Amendment 2-2009

**Policy 7.E.3, regarding recreation and open spaces, states that the Region may provide funding for land acquisition in cases where this cannot be accomplished through other agencies. Under Policy 7.E.4, the Region will evaluate the potential of all public lands, including property owned by the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority, for recreation and open space uses. Those lands considered desirable for recreation and open space uses should be retained in public ownership with the operational responsibility transferred through lease or other agreements if necessary to the appropriate recreation, conservation or park agency.**

The implementation mechanisms for the Policy Plan are outlined in Section 12. Policy 12.72 indicates that as a part of the overall implementation strategy, the Region may establish programs for the provision of grants and loans to local municipalities for the purpose of achieving the goals of Community Improvement Plans within Urban Area Boundaries.

The Regional Policy Plan Amendment 2-2009 amends the Niagara Regional Policy Plan in order to align existing policies with the policies of the Growth Plan (2006) and the Provincial Policy Statement (2005); to implement the strategic directions of Niagara's Growth Management Strategy (Niagara 2031); and to establish a new urban vision for the long term growth and development of Niagara.

Amendment 2-2009 is currently under appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board; however, the general policies summarized below remain relevant to the East Waterfront.

The Regional Policy Plan Amendment 2-2009 describes a vision for Niagara Region that aspires to build sustainable complete communities that will address the social, environmental economic and cultural aspects of land use planning. Particularly relevant to the East Waterfront, the Policy Plan Amendment 2-2009 articulates a desire to create complete communities by, among other initiatives:

- Encouraging mixed and integrated land uses;
- Making efficient use of land, resources and infrastructure;
- Promoting compact, transit supportive development friendly to active transportation;
- Supporting intensification;
- Fostering development that conserves natural resources and maintains or enhances natural systems;
- Integrating cultural programs and facilities in urban areas

Amendment 2-2009 requires that each municipality develop and implement a strategy and policies for promoting intensification. The intensification target for Port Colborne is 15% of growth annually to 2031. Local strategies should consider a range of tools, including Community Improvement Plans, to encourage growth and development in intensification areas.

**Policy 5.6(9) of Amendment 2-2009 encourages the development of integrated parks and open space systems. Section 5.9, regarding urban design and the public realms, promotes urban design analysis, municipal beautification, streetscape improvements, public art and the establishment of public gardens to ensure communities remain attractive places, enhance quality of life, and encourage tourism.** The inclusion of urban design analysis in the preparation of Community Improvement Plans is also encouraged.



## 2.5 Smart Growth in Niagara and Model Urban Design Guidelines

As part of its commitment to sustainability, the Niagara Region initiated Smarter Niagara and established ten Smart Growth Principles:

- Create a mix of land uses
- Promote compact built form
- Offer a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Produce walkable neighbourhoods and communities
- Foster attractive communities and a sense of place
- Preserve farmland and natural resources
- Direct development into existing communities
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Make development predictable and cost effective
- Encourage community stakeholders collaboration

In 2002, in support of the principles, the Smarter Niagara Incentive Programs were developed, and endorsed by Regional Council. The Region completed a major review and update of the programs in 2011, and Council approved a number of revisions and additions in December 2011. A description of the Smarter Niagara Incentive Programs is provided in Appendix A. Many of the programs are potentially applicable to properties in the East Waterfront, including the following:

- Reduction of Regional Development Charges
- Property Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Tax Increment Funding Program
- Building and Facade Improvement Grant/Loan Program
- Residential Grant/Loan Program
- Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program
- Heritage Restoration and Improvement Grant/Loan Program
- Environmental Assessment Study Grant Program
- Public Domain Incentives Program

The Region also prepared the Model Urban Design Guidelines in 2005 to support the Smart Growth Principles and to guide their implementation by municipalities. The guidelines address a range of urban design matters within the public realm and private realm of communities and are principally oriented to new developments in greenfield areas. The guidelines applicable to existing main streets and other infill areas have been considered in the preparation of this CIP.

## 2.6 Adopted Draft City of Port Colborne New Official Plan (2006)

The Draft City of Port Colborne Official Plan was adopted by City Council in 2006. Niagara Region, however, has not yet approved the plan, and City staff has identified the need for a number of revisions to the plan. Nevertheless, the Region has approved Official Plan Amendment 83, which allows the municipality to create Community Improvement Plans, and other elements of the plan remain relevant to the East Waterfront.

The Official Plan includes a number of strategic directions under the following headings intended to inform the city's growth and development. The following directions are most relevant to the East Waterfront:

- **Continue to improve public access to the waterfront by acquisition and development of public spaces (II-B4b).**
- **Aggressively pursue the remediation of contaminated older industrial lands (II-B6a).**
- **Re-use some of these older industrial lands along the waterfront and canal for tourism, recreational, residential or other uses that reintegrate these lands into community life (II-B6b).**
- **Provide for new canal-related, non-noxious industrial uses adjacent to community uses in the harbour area (II-B6c).**

Relevant Strategic Planning Policies that flow from the directions include the following:

- **The City will work closely with the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation or appropriate federal government agency to ensure that federal lands along the Welland Canal are available for industrial and/or community uses (II-C1b2).**
- **Public investments that support tourism development will be continued, such as:**
  - **beautification of areas of the City, such as the Downtown and Main Street, the waterfront and lands adjacent to the Welland Canal;**
  - **creation of public spaces and facilities;**
  - **creation of facilities, including but not limited to trails, that support bicycle tourism;**
  - **support for the designation of national historic sites;**

- **enhancement of natural features and historic assets; and,**

- **acquisition of waterfront property for public purposes (II-C1e2).**

- **Linkages between all types of parks and open space is encouraged throughout the municipality (II-C3a4).**
- **Investments in new off-street cycling trails and on-street bike lanes will be focused in the downtown and waterfront areas, although this should not deter investment in other cycling trails where appropriate (II-C7a5).**
- All new developments should be consistent with and reinforce the existing town character of Port Colborne (II-C8b).
- Natural environment and built heritage features should be integrated with an open space system (II-C8d1).
- An interconnected system of open space should be created by incorporating Environmental Areas, woodlots, hedgerows, farm lanes, community parks, schools and storm water management facilities through the placement of these elements where appropriate or by providing links between them through recreational trails or street networks (II-C8d3).

On Map 1 (see Figure 2), the Draft Official Plan designates the existing residential areas in the East Waterfront, including properties on Nickel Street, as 'Urban Neighbourhood' and the existing industrial areas as 'Industrial/Employment Area'. In addition to residential uses, neighbourhood commercial and institutional uses are permitted in Urban Neighbourhoods. In Industrial/Employment areas, a range of industrial uses are permitted as well as secondary commercial uses and community uses.

Section III-K2 of the plan acknowledges the 'Waterfront/Harbourfront Revitalization Study Area' and states that the City is planning for decommissioning and redevelopment of older industrial lands adjacent to the Welland Canal and the waterfront. Except for existing, expansions of existing, or permitted land uses, no other development is permitted in the study area. **The plan calls for the preparation of a Secondary Plan and Community Improvement Plan for the Waterfront/Harbourfront area that will:**

## 2.7 Official Plan Amendment 83

- Facilitate the short-term development and/or redevelopment of predominantly vacant and former industrial land on the east bank of the Welland Canal;
- Address the issue of environmental contamination and approach to remediating the contamination;
- Address the protection and enhancement of natural features;
- Address existing and future land use issues; and,
- Include open and transparent stakeholder consultation.

There are two policies that apply to specific sites in the East Waterfront. One states that the former 'Inco Rec Hall' on Davis Street shall be for indoor recreational and/or social purposes. The other policy permits an eat-in or take-out restaurant at the southwest corner of Nickel Street and Mitchell Street.

Map 1 of the Draft Official Plan also identifies the general limits of the Lake Erie Shoreline Wave Uprush and refers to the Lake Erie Shoreline Management Plan, which sets out standards for overcoming hazards due to flooding or wave uprush and outlines hazard prevention and protection techniques.

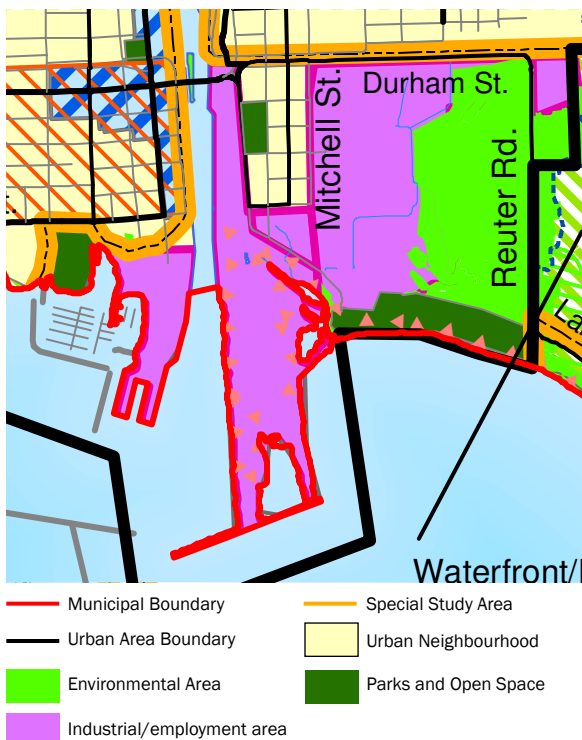


FIGURE 2: EXCERPT FROM MAP 1 OF THE DRAFT OFFICIAL PLAN

Official Plan Amendment 83 (OPA 83) replaces the section of the current Official Plan that pertains to Community Improvement and replaces it with updated policies that apply to the entire Port Colborne Urban Area. OPA 83 permits the designation of Community Improvement Areas if they adhere to one or more conditions, although priority will be given to areas that: have the highest number of conditions; the conditions are particularly acute; or one of the conditions is spread across the entire Urban Area of the City. The conditions are:

- Buildings, building facades and/or property, including buildings, structures and lands of heritage and/or architectural significance in need of preservation, restoration, repair, rehabilitation or redevelopment;
- Non-conforming, conflicting encroaching or incompatible land uses or activities;
- Deficiencies in physical infrastructure, including but not limited to sanitary sewer systems, and/or watermain system, roads, parking facilities, sidewalks, curbs, streetscapes and/or street lighting;
- Poor road access and/or traffic circulation;
- Deficiencies in community and social services including but not limited to: public open space, municipal parks, neighbourhood parks, indoor/outdoor recreational facilities and public social facilities;
- Inadequate mix of housing types;
- Known or perceived environmental contamination;
- Poor overall visual quality and/or urban design including but not limited to: streetscapes, built form, parks and open space;
- High commercial vacancy rates;
- Existing or potential business improvement areas;
- Vacant lots and under-utilized properties which have potential for infill, intensification, redevelopment or expansion to better utilize the land base;
- Shortage of land to accommodate widening of existing rights-of-way, building expansion, parking and/or loading facilities;

- Other barriers to the repair, rehabilitation or redevelopment of under-utilized land and/or buildings;
- Any other environmental, social or community economic development reasons.

OPA 83 establishes 19 potential objectives for Community Improvement Plans:

- **Encourage the renovation, repair, remediation, rehabilitation or other improvement of lands and/or buildings;**
- **Encourage the preservation, restoration, adaptive reuse and improvement of historically or architecturally significant buildings and properties;**
- **Encourage the restoration, maintenance, improvement and protection of natural habitat, parks, open space and recreation amenities;**
- **Encourage residential and other types of infill and intensification;**
- **Encourage the construction of affordable housing;**
- **Reconcile and ameliorate existing land use conflicts and minimize or avoid future land use conflicts;**
- Where necessary include an Environmental Impact Study which determines specific measures to prevent impact on natural heritage features;
- **Maintain, upgrade and improve municipal services and public utilities such as sanitary sewers, storm sewers, watermains, roads and sidewalks;**
- Improve vehicular, cyclist and pedestrian traffic flow;
- Encourage public transit supportive land uses and improve the quality of and accessibility to transit and parking facilities;
- Encourage off-street parking and provide municipal parking facilities where feasible and appropriate;
- Promote the ongoing viability and revitalization of the Downtown, Waterfront/Harbourfront and other general areas requiring community improvement;
- Encourage the remediation and redevelopment of brownfields;

- Support existing or potential business improvement areas;
- Improve environmental conditions;
- Improve social conditions;
- Promote cultural development;
- Facilitate and promote community economic development;
- Improve community quality, safety and stability.

Public input is required during the preparation of Community Improvement Plan, and OPA 83 sets out the minimum requirements of a CIP. It also outlines a range of actions the City may undertake to implement a CIP, including:

- Acquire land or buildings;
- Provide monetary and non-monetary incentive programs;
- Apply for financial assistance from senior level government programs;
- Participate in senior level government programs that assist landowners;
- Provide information on municipal initiatives;
- Support heritage conservation through the Ontario Heritage Act.



## 2.8 Port Colborne Zoning By-law

As shown in Figure 3, the East Waterfront contains a number of zones under the City's Zoning By-law:

- **Residential (R3)** permits detached, semi-detached and duplex dwellings with a maximum height of 11 metres.
- **Residential (R4)** permits street and block townhouse dwellings with a maximum height of 11 metres and apartment buildings with a maximum height of 20 metres
- **Neighbourhood Commercial (NC)** permits convenience stores, personal service shops, day nurseries, take-out restaurants, pet grooming establishments as well as one residential dwelling unit per commercial use. The maximum height in a neighbourhood commercial zone is 8 metres.
- **Central Commercial (CC)** permits a broad range of commercial uses in buildings up to 20 metres tall.
- **Light Industrial (LI)** permits a maximum height of 11 metres, unless the zone abuts a residential zone, in which case the maximum height is 8 metres. A wide range of industrial uses are permitted, including but not limited to repair shops; yards for the concealed storage of building materials; food processing establishments; scientific or medical establishments; printers and; publishing establishments; ship chandlers; warehouses; machine shops; manufacturing of stationary, office equipment, household furnishings, appliances, clothing, shoes; assembly plants; truck terminal; fabricating; bake shop; day nursery.
- **Heavy Industrial (HI)** permits all of the above uses and the following: open outside storage and establishments for manufacturing, extracting, processing, refining, milling, forging, pressing, casting, smelting, fabricating, erecting, assembling, forming, producing, shaping, storing, shipping, repairing, machining, cleaning and servicing.
- **Environmental Protection (EP)** permits: agricultural uses and accessory structures as well as parks, playgrounds, tennis courts, lawn bowling greens, outdoor natural rinks, athletic fields, golf courses, picnic areas and boat launching ramps, boat houses and docking facilities, together with necessary accessory structures.

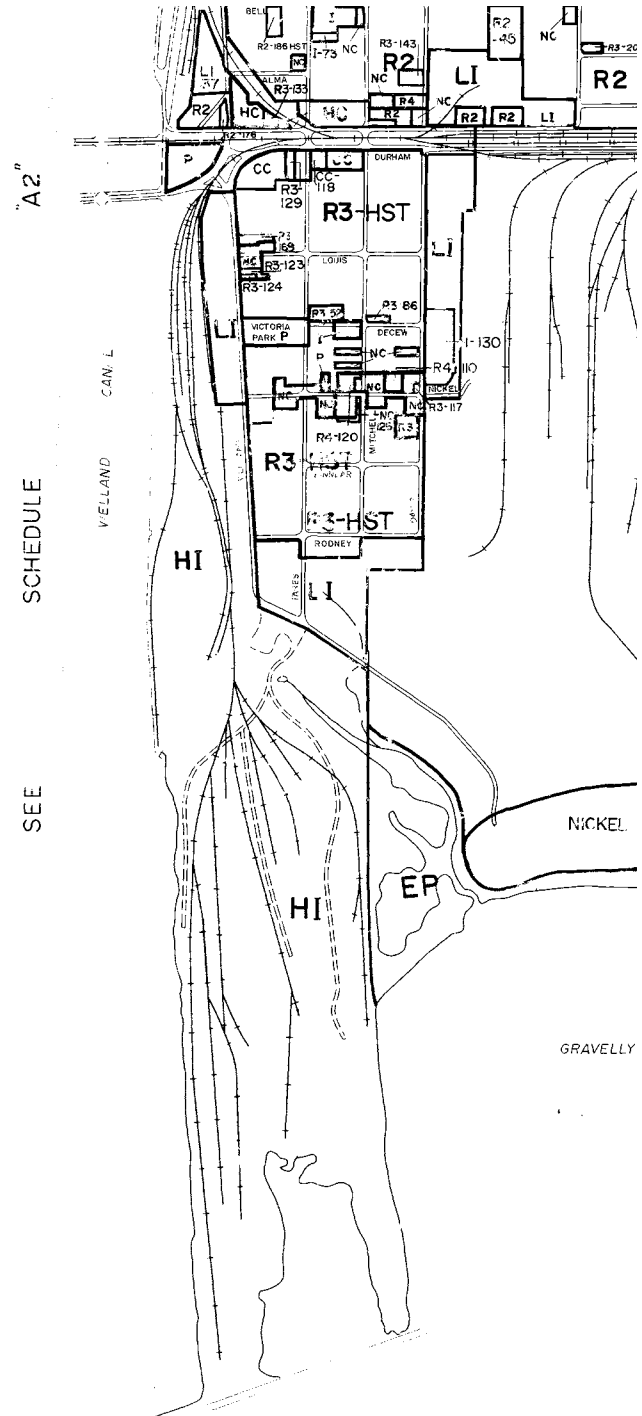


FIGURE 3: EXCERPT FROM ZONING MAP

## 2.9 Brownfields Community Improvement Plan

In November 2009, the City adopted a Community Improvement Plan that applies to brownfield sites throughout the urban area of the city, including those in the East Waterfront. As defined in the CIP, brownfields are “abandoned, vacant, derelict, idled or underutilized property in the urban area of the City of Port Colborne with an active potential for redevelopment, where redevelopment is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination.”

The primary purpose of the Brownfields CIP is to put in place the following financial incentive programs intended to encourage redevelopment:

Program Name	Program Description	Recommended Program Duration
<b>Feasibility Study Grant Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grant equivalent to 50% of the cost of an eligible feasibility study.</li> <li>- Maximum grant of \$7,500 per property/project and one grant per property/project.</li> </ul>	- Approximately 5 years with option to extend for up to another 5 years.
<b>Environmental Site Assessment Grant Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grant equivalent to 50% of the cost of an eligible environmental site assessment, remedial action plan or risk assessment.</li> <li>- Maximum grant of \$15,000 per environmental study.</li> <li>- Maximum of 2 studies per property/project.</li> <li>- Maximum total grant of \$25,000 per property/project.</li> </ul>	- Approximately 5 years with option to extend for up to another 5 years.
<b>Brownfield Property Tax Assistance Program</b>	- Cancellation of the municipal property tax increase and the education property tax increase for up to 3 years.	- Approximately 5 years with option to extend for up to another 5 years.
<b>Brownfield Rehabilitation Grant Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grant equivalent to between 60% and 100% of the municipal property tax increase created by the project for up to 12 years after project completion.</li> <li>- Grant level is dependent on incorporation of Smart Growth principles, and Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standard achieved (No Certification, Certified, Silver, Gold, or Platinum), or incorporation of a treatment based remediation approach rather than dig and dump.</li> </ul>	- Approximately 10 years with the option to extend for up to another 5 years.
<b>Building Permit Fee Grant Program</b>	- Grant equivalent to 100% of the building permit fees paid.	- Approximately 5 years with option to extend for up to another 5 years.
<b>Brownfields Development Charge Exemption Program<sup>9</sup></b>	- Up to 70% reduction of development charge payable on a brownfield site approved under the Brownfield Rehabilitation Grant Program.	- Approximately 5 years with option to extend for up to another 5 years.

TABLE 1: BROWNFIELD COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN SUMMARY OF INCENTIVE PROGRAMS





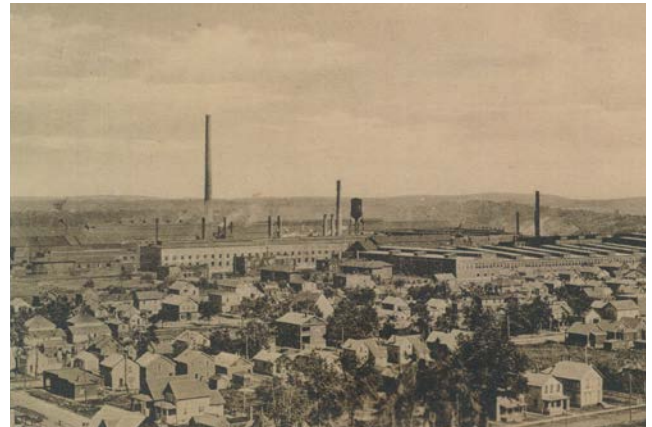
# 3 Description and Analysis

## 3.1 Brief History

The history of Port Colborne and the East Waterfront is tied to the Welland Canal and the industries it attracted (American and Canadian tourists also played a significant but lesser role in shaping the community). Businesses serving the marine trade flourished after the first canal opened in 1833. Completion of the third Welland Canal in 1886-87, along with the discovery of natural gas in the area, brought an employment boom.

The Canadian Furnace Company, a subsidiary of Algoma Steel, built a blast furnace on the east side of the canal and Inco opened its nickel refinery in 1918. With other businesses catering to the shipping industry (bulk cargo handling and storage, chandlers, ship repair, etc.), thousands of jobs existed on the East Waterfront. Housing and storefronts were built between canal-side industries and Inco, and a neighbourhood was born. The growth of the city and larger region turned Nickel Beach, long owned by Inco (now Vale) and leased to the City, into a popular summer destination.

With closure of the blast furnaces, Vale ceasing its base metals refining and a decline in ship traffic, the level of industrial employment in the area has dropped significantly in the past 30 years. Today, there is some industrial activity on the canal—cargo handling, ship repair and ship breaking—and Vale maintains refining and processing facilities on its land, employing approximately 200 people.





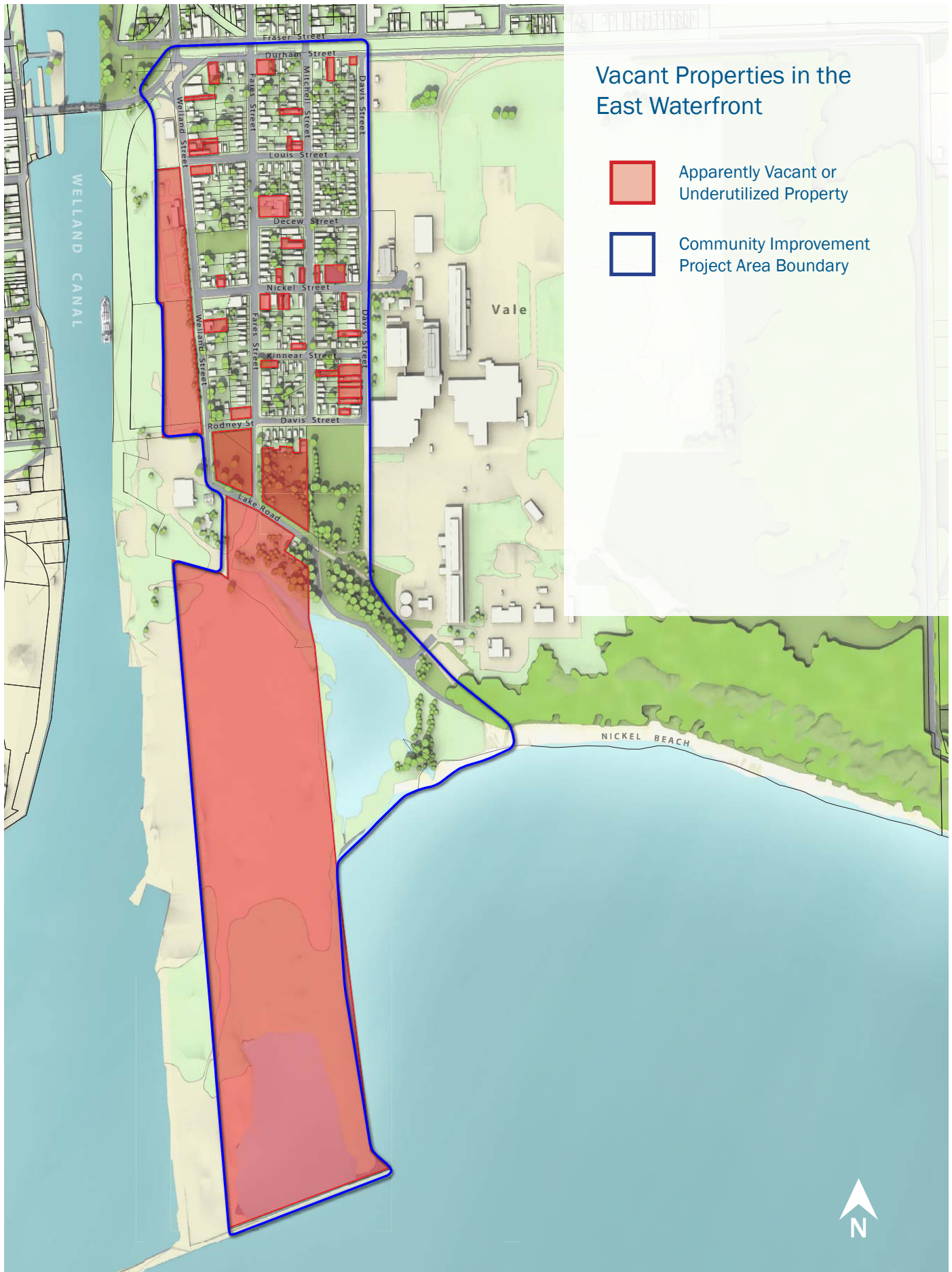


FIGURE 4: VACANT AND UNDERUTILIZED PROPERTIES

## 3.2 The East Waterfront Today

Economic decline along with the impacts of former industries has had severe consequences on the neighbourhood today known as the East Village. Rates of unemployment and poverty are known to be high in the area, contributing to issues of community-wide concern, including addictions, crime and poor nutrition. There are many vacant properties and buildings, and a number of buildings in disrepair. Although a small number of commercial businesses in the area remain, the East Waterfront has seen no new commercial development for many years. Parts of the area's public infrastructure, notably sidewalks, are not in good condition, which is not unusual for an older neighbourhood.

Figure 4 identifies industrial properties in the East Waterfront that are vacant and residential and commercial buildings that appear to be vacant. While many homes in the neighbourhood appear to be well maintained, it is evident that the exteriors of a significant number of homes are in need of repair. The photographs on pages 22-23 provide a general sense of the neighbourhood's character and overall physical condition.

Regarding environmental issues in the area, a technical review was undertaken in 2004 by CH2M Hill. Based on environmental studies completed or partially completed at the time, the review confirmed that, in addition to the well-documented contamination that resulted from the Inco refinery, former industrial lands adjacent to the canal owned by Transport Canada contain contaminants above the MOE guidelines for sensitive land uses (e.g., residential and parkland). In 2005, site-specific risk assessments (SSRAs) were completed for these lands, making general recommendations regarding mitigative actions required to allow new uses on the properties. More detailed environmental studies will be required to identify the most appropriate remediation strategies based on the specific uses proposed for the lands.

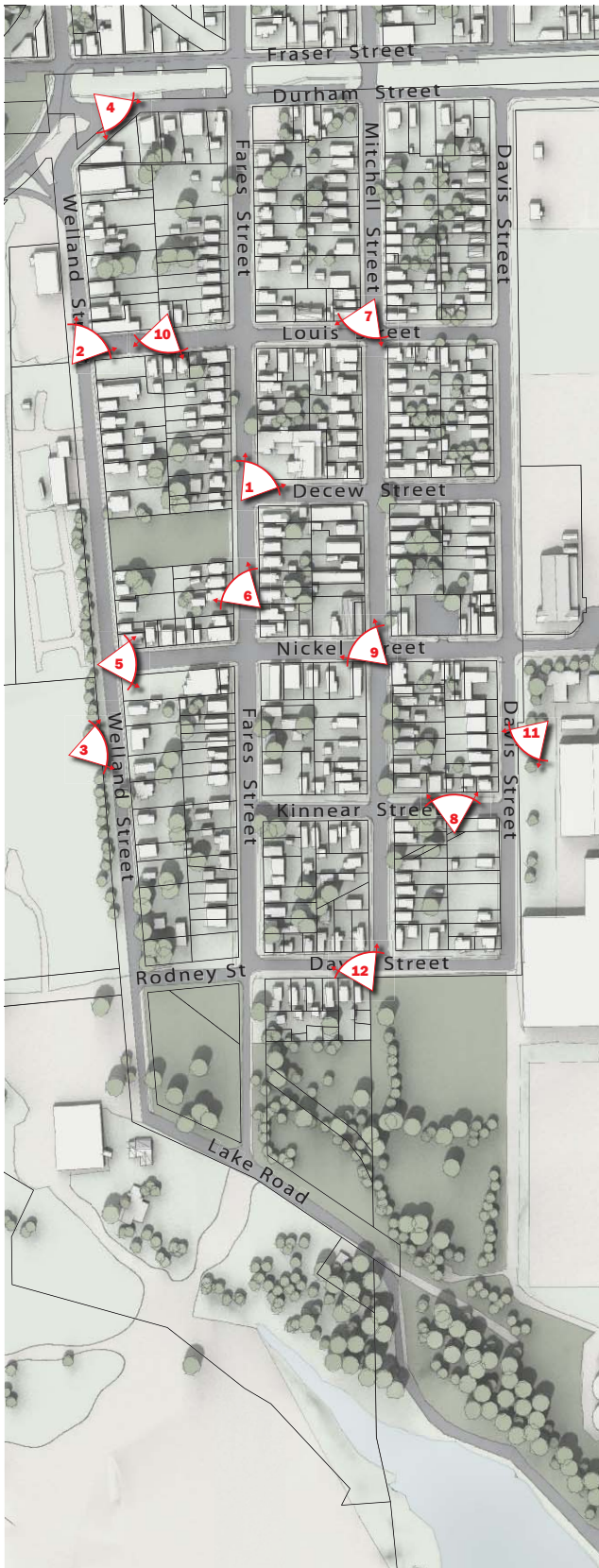
Despite the physical decline that has occurred in the area over the past few decades and the presence of contaminated land, the East Waterfront has positive attributes. Historic buildings, some part of the area's industrial legacy, distinguish the neighbourhood. East Village Community Park (formerly Victoria Park) is well used and maintained. Port Cares, a community organization that "provides leadership, support, and resources to enhance the quality of life for individuals in Port Colborne and the surrounding Region", has established an Outreach Food Centre on Nickel Street. And Nickel Beach continues to be a regional attraction.

Nevertheless, the area's negative physical qualities far outweigh the positive aspects. Based on the analysis of existing conditions summarized above, the East Waterfront clearly meets several of the criteria for a Community Improvement Project Area established in the Planning Act and reinforced in the City's Official Plan:

- In contains buildings, including heritage buildings, in need of preservation, restoration, repair, rehabilitation or redevelopment.
- The proximity of housing to active industrial properties continues to create compatibility issues.
- There are deficiencies in physical infrastructure, including sanitary sewers, roads, parking facilities, sidewalks, curbs and streetscapes.
- There is known or perceived environmental contamination.
- The overall visual quality of streetscapes, built form and open space is poor.
- There are a number of vacant lots and under-utilized properties that have potential for infill, intensification or redevelopment to better utilize the land base.
- There are barriers to the repair, rehabilitation or redevelopment of under-utilized land and/or buildings—property owners reportedly cannot afford to make repairs, and there is no market demand for redevelopment.

*The East Waterfront has assets to build upon but also areas in need of significant improvement.*





1



2



3



4

FIGURE 5: EXISTING CONDITIONS PHOTOGRAPHS - KEY MAP





5



6



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11



12





### 3.3 Opportunities

Looking at the East Waterfront’s assets and disadvantages, there are several opportunities for improvements that together can lead to economic and physical renewal:

- The area contains a number of architecturally and/or historically significant buildings that, if maintained, would enhance the area’s distinctive qualities.
- Beyond the canal-side property that will continue to be controlled by the Seaway, there is significant, underutilized land that could accommodate uses that are compatible with and benefit the community. The “spit” of land south of Lake Road also provides the opportunity to enhance public access to the lakefront.
- Nickel Beach is an important natural feature and major seasonal attraction that would benefit from more amenities and off-beach parking.
- Within and at the edges of the neighbourhood are vacant properties where new, well-designed development would help to improve the image of the East Waterfront.
- Planned improvements could be used to provide training and job opportunities for local residents.
- Residents of the East Waterfront are committed to helping improve their neighbourhood and have been working collaboratively to address issues. The strong sense of community will be important to encouraging improvements to private properties and attracting new residents.



photo courtesy Pretty Welder



*The keys to physically improving the East Waterfront are to buffer the neighbourhood from adjacent industrial lands, improve connections to the lake, beautify neighbourhood streetscapes, and promote renovations and redevelopment.*

### 3.4 Municipal Comprehensive Review of Employment Lands

Before a new land use plan can be developed and adopted for the East Waterfront, one that capitalizes on the opportunities for the area, an important question must be addressed. Should the vacant and underutilized industrial lands identified in Figure 4 continue to be reserved for employment uses, or should they be converted to other non-employment uses, such as open space, retail and/or residential?

As per the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, proposed land use conversions must be subject to a municipal comprehensive review to determine if the criteria for appropriate conversions are satisfied. On behalf of the City, Urban Strategies undertook a comprehensive review and concluded that conversion of the subject lands is appropriate, since it meets the five tests set out in the Growth Plan, as explained below.

#### **There is a need for the conversion.**

The bulk of the lands in question have not been used for industrial or other employment uses since the Canadian Furnace Company ceased its operations on the canal in the 1970s. A scrap yard continued to operate but has been closed for many years. The current abandoned state of the lands has adversely affected the visual appearance of the adjacent East Village neighbourhood and the broader area, including Downtown Port Colborne, on the west side of the canal. Converting the lands to other uses that are more compatible with the neighbourhood would allow for the accommodation of uses that enhance the image and quality of life of the community and the larger city. Such uses would also create an improved buffer between the neighbourhood and the ongoing industrial uses at the canal edge.

#### **Allocated employment forecasts for the municipality will be met.**

In developing its Growth Management Strategy, Niagara Region forecasted that employment on employment lands in Port Colborne would increase by 500 jobs between 2006 and 2031. Assuming a density of 30 jobs per net hectare, the City would require 17 net hectares of employment land to accommodate this growth. At higher densities supported by the Province's Growth Plan, the land requirement would be lower (11-14 hectares). Based on data supplied by the City, the Region identified that Port Colborne has 32 hectares of vacant employment lands, after adjusting for long term vacancy, or a surplus of 15-21 hectares. For the purposes of the Growth Management Strategy, the supply of vacant land did not include the vacant lands in the East Waterfront

because most of the lands are owned by Transport Canada for specific uses related to the canal and also because the feasibility of servicing the lands south of Lake Road is uncertain.

Since the East Waterfront employment lands were not factored into the analysis of long-term employment land supply, and since, nevertheless, there is a surplus of land elsewhere in the City, the conversion of the East Waterfront lands would not prevent the employment forecasts for Port Colborne from being met.

#### **The conversion will not adversely affect the overall viability of the employment area.**

The conversion of the subject lands would reduce the depth of the adjacent employment area along the canal, which extends from the mouth of the canal to Clarence Street, to approximately 300 feet (91 metres). Transport Canada and the St. Lawrence Seaway Authority have indicated that this is sufficient for the industrial activities currently being accommodated along the canal, and for future uses they may wish to accommodate. The presence of buffering uses on the subject lands may, in fact, enhance the viability of the remaining employment area by mitigating impacts on the neighbourhood and reducing complaints from residents.

#### **There is existing infrastructure to accommodate the conversion.**

There is an existing street network and servicing infrastructure adjacent to the portion of the subject lands adjacent to Welland Street, with capacity to accommodate non-employment uses. Existing road infrastructure can also provide access to the portion of the lands south of Lake Road, i.e., the spit. The challenges of providing underground services to all parts of spit, given geological constraints, may limit the range of new non-employment uses on this portion but does not prevent conversion.

#### **The lands are not required over the long term for the employment purposes for which they were designated.**

The original purpose of the subject lands was to accommodate industrial uses that directly benefited from adjacency to the Welland Canal. The bulk of the lands are owned by Transport Canada, and as noted above, the Seaway Authority have identified the lands as surplus to their current and forecasted needs. Furthermore, there remain vacant designated employment lands farther north along the canal, less proximate to established neighbourhoods and Downtown.

## 4 Community Goals and Long-term Vision

### 4.1 Community Goals

Based on the analysis of existing conditions summarized in the previous section and input from members of the East Village community at consultation events held in 2011, the following nine primary community goals were established for the East Waterfront:

1. *Repair and renovate existing houses and other buildings*
2. *Protect, restore and re-use architecturally and historically significant buildings*
3. *Improve the quality of streetscapes in the neighbourhood*
4. *Reduce the environmental and visual impact of industrial uses*
5. *Attract new investment and development to vacant properties*
6. *Create new open spaces and recreational opportunities*
7. *Improve pedestrian and cycling connections to Nickel Beach and the lake generally*
8. *Establish more attractions at Nickel Beach*
9. *Protect and enhance the significant natural features of the lakefront*

### 4.2 Long-term Vision

The community goals became the basis for a long-term vision for the East Waterfront, also developed with input from residents. It is important to use a long-term vision to guide a community improvement plan and other plans for a large area, since it may take many years to realize the desired changes, as is the case in the East Waterfront. The vision described below helps ensure that each new initiative in the area is consistent with the community's and the City's aspirations. It also informs residents, business owners, developers and other levels of government about the enormous potential for positive change in the area, thereby encouraging reinvestment and improvements.

The seven major components of the long-term vision identified in Figure 6 are described and illustrated on the following pages. The rendered images of the long-term vision and precedent photographs are conceptual illustrations and not intended to be prescriptive about improvements in the East Waterfront. While the elements of the Community Improvement Plan described in the subsequent sections are based on the vision, actual projects may result in configurations of infrastructure, open spaces and buildings that vary from those shown in the illustrations.

*The proposed long-term vision for the East Waterfront responds to the opportunities for improvements and supports the community's goals for the area. It calls for green streets and open spaces that will create the setting for neighbourhood renewal, infill development and a variety of lakefront experiences.*





## The Long-Term Vision



A Green Edge



Neighbourhood Renovation and Infill



Neighbourhood Extension



Green Streets



An Environmental Park



New Nickel Beach Amenities



Bridge-to-Beach Trail

FIGURE 6: THE LONG-TERM VISION FOR THE EAST WATERFRONT COMMUNITY





## A Green Edge

Landscaped parkland is proposed on the former industrial lands on the west side of Welland Street to provide a buffer between the neighbourhood and ongoing industrial activity along the canal and to accommodate open space amenities for residents. The parkland would contain berms to partially block views of the canal-side uses and be heavily planted with trees and shrubs. It could also contain play structures, a splash pad and/or a natural skating rink. Remnants from the abandoned scrap yard could be used as materials for sculptures in the park. The parkland would be designed with community input and likely implemented in phases.





# Neighbourhood Renovation and Infill

Central to the vision is the incremental restoration, renovation and maintenance of existing homes and other buildings in the community. As this occurs, property values will gradually rise and the area will become more attractive to prospective new residents and businesses.

Recognizing the neighbourhood contains vacant or underutilized properties, the vision incorporates sensitive new development on key sites. New townhouses or storefronts with apartments on upper floors occupy gaps along Nickel Street while maintaining side parking lots for existing businesses. Such uses would reinforce Nickel Street as the neighbourhood’s “main street”. New houses that complement existing homes are also proposed on the industrial property at the corner of Fares Street and Decew Street.







## Neighbourhood Extension

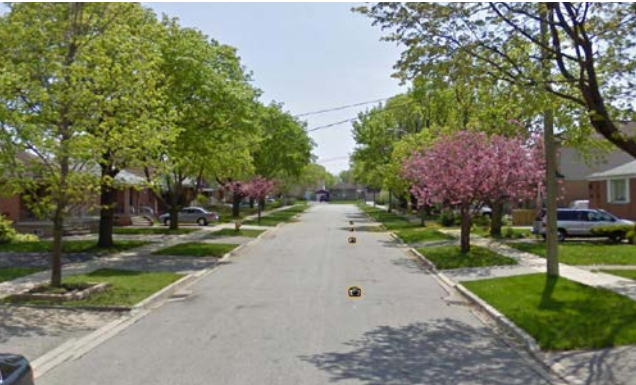
As both the neighbourhood and the lakefront become more attractive, the vacant properties south of Rodney Street can be expected to generate more interest from developers. The vision proposes a mix of townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings on these sites to complement and extend the neighbourhood. The new buildings would establish a strong and positive image of the neighbourhood from the south while capitalizing on the proximity and views to the lake.





# Green Streets

The character of streetscapes is fundamental to the character of a neighbourhood. The vision calls for a greening of the community through modifications to roadway widths and extensive tree planting along most streets. Trees will not only make the area more beautiful but also help to shade and cool the neighbourhood in summer.







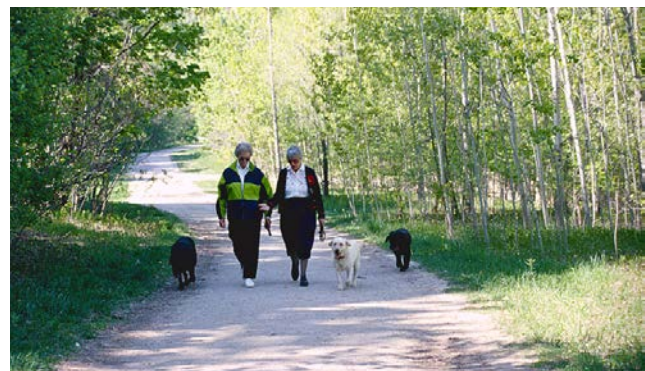
## An Environmental Park

The spit of land south of Lake Road presents an unprecedented opportunity to create a new open space feature that fundamentally alters the profile of the East Waterfront—a unique legacy park that connects to and complements Nickel Beach. The park concept is based on a mostly naturalized, heavily vegetated landscape with winding trails. On the Gravelly Bay side, a parking lot would serve both Nickel Beach and the park. An entry to both the park and the beach would be established on Lake Road, near the foot of Fares Street, and an entry road would cross the Hamilton Marine property to access the public land. For healthy and safety reasons, access to the settling pond owned and used by Vale Inco would need to be restricted but should not prevent a pedestrian connection via a bridge and trail between the proposed parking lot and the beach.



Adjacent to the parking lot, the park could also include a facility for renting and launching small, non-motorized water craft—dinghies, sail boards, kayaks, etc. Small-scale commercial uses, such as a restaurant or hotel, could also be accommodated in this area, provided the use could be serviced appropriately. Access to the gull nesting area at the south end of the spit would need to be restricted at the appropriate times of the year.

A detailed master plan for the park, supported by the appropriate technical studies and informed by the vision, would be required. Given the scale of the park and the level of investment required to realize it, implementation would likely occur in phases over many years.





## New Nickel Beach Amenities

Nickel Beach should play a key role in enhancing the image and liveability of the East Waterfront. In addition to a new entry and parking lot for the beach, the vision proposes new amenities at the west end of the beach, including a pavilion that accommodates washrooms, change rooms and a refreshment stand. A short boardwalk would also provide a location for seasonal vendors, benches and interpretive displays about the area's natural and cultural heritage. Parking for disabled persons would also be provided close to these amenities.



Since this area is located in a floodplain and is subject to wave uprush, new uses and structures will be subject to the policies and guidelines of the Lake Erie Shoreline Management Plan.

## Bridge-to-Beach Trail

A recreational trail for pedestrians, cyclists, in-line skaters and users of scooters and wheel chairs will be a vital element of an improved East Waterfront, providing access to the lakefront and linking the area to the city and regional trail network. The trail will begin at Seaway Park and wind through the planned parks and open spaces, terminating at the lake. As a spur of the Niagara Circle Route and Welland Canals Trail, it will draw visitors and reinforce the area as a regional attraction.





FIGURE 7: PROPOSED LAND USE FRAMEWORK



## 5 The Plan

In translating the long-term vision into a plan to guide land use decisions, development applications and public investments in the East Waterfront, there are two essential layers: (1) a land use framework and associated policy directions, and (2) a public realm improvement strategy.

### 5.1 Land Use Framework and Policy Directions

The proposed land use framework for the East Waterfront, illustrated in Figure 7, comprises the following land use areas both within and bordering the Community Improvement Project Area.

#### Low-density Urban Neighbourhood

This designation would apply to most of the existing neighbourhood and carry forward the existing land use and built form policies in the Official Plan that currently apply in these areas. In addition to detached, semi-detached and townhouse dwellings, wholly enclosed artist studios, workshops and home-based businesses compatible with the neighbourhood should be permitted.

#### Medium-density Urban Neighbourhood

This designation would apply to the vacant sites between Rodney Street and Lake Road, where townhouses and apartment buildings are proposed. New development should be required to address the adjacent streets, locate parking behind or at the side of buildings, and incorporate high-quality materials. Best practices in environmental design would be strongly encouraged.

#### Mixed Use Areas

This designation would apply to the properties along Nickel Street and Durham Street and would permit neighbourhood-oriented, small-scale commercial uses, townhouses and apartment buildings of 2-5 storeys. Buildings that combine commercial uses on the ground floor and residential units on upper floors should be encouraged. All buildings should be required to address and frame the street, with parking located at the side or rear.

#### Light Industrial Areas

Selected sites on Davis Street and Welland Street, adjacent to the neighbourhood, would continue to be designated for industrial uses wholly contained within buildings and which are generally compatible with the community. The form and layout of new development should be required to respect the character of the neighbourhood. Loading and servicing areas should be located at the rear of buildings, and parking generally should not be permitted in front of buildings.

#### General Industrial Areas

To support employment in the area and the functions of the Welland Canal, heavy industrial uses would continue to be permitted on the Seaway-controlled lands along the canal and much of Vale's lands. Policies should help to ensure that such uses mitigate any adverse impacts on neighbouring residential areas and open spaces. Unsightly storage areas should be screened, and landscaped open space buffers should be required.

#### Parks and Open Space

The most substantial change to the existing land use framework for the area is the addition of designated parkland and open space where previously industrial uses were permitted. Since the proposed new open spaces will be subject to further design and programming, policies should permit a broad range of community, cultural and ancillary uses in these areas. In addition to environmental features and recreation and community facilities, appropriate small-scale commercial uses that support the intended functions of the parks should be permitted.

For the area east of Welland Street and north of Rodney Street, the framework reflects existing land uses and is consistent with the City's Draft Official Plan, which designates most of this area as 'Urban Neighbourhood'. The only recommended revision to the Draft Official Plan, as it applies to the existing neighbourhood, is a modification to the boundaries of the 'Parks and Open Space' designation to accurately reflect the boundaries of East Village Community Park.

*The most significant recommended change to the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law is the conversion of employment lands within the CIP area to designations suggested by the long-term vision.*

## 5.2 Public Realm Improvement Strategy

The public realm of a community comprises its streets, parks, trails, other public open spaces and public buildings. These are places for civic life, cultural activities, recreation, education and social interaction, and therefore are fundamental to building healthy communities and a civil society. The qualities and amenities of the public realm also play a significant role in defining the image of a community.

The long-term vision for the East Waterfront includes major enhancements to its public realm, the most significant being the creation of a linked system of open spaces and trails on the west side of Welland Street, extending across the spit, and streetscape improvements across the neighbourhood. Together, these changes are intended to achieve multiple objectives:

- Enhance the environmental health of the area;
- Provide new open space amenities for residents of the East Village and the larger city;
- Improve access to the lakefront;
- Encourage walking, cycling and park play;
- Create a setting for community and cultural activities;
- Beautify the area and reinforce a sense of community pride;
- Interpret the area's natural and cultural heritage;
- Extend the regional trail network;
- Establish new tourist attractions;
- Encourage private reinvestment in properties and create an attractive setting for new development.

Further to this last point, in light of existing conditions in the East Waterfront and the poor image it has to outsiders, enhancements to the public realm will be critical to catalyzing private investment in the area. As an incentive, one that typically increases property values, they will be as important as financial incentives in achieving and coordinating overall community improvement.

The extent of proposed public realm improvements

necessitates a phased approach to implementing them. The strategy outlined below describes the key projects that make up the public realm plan, identified in Figure 8, highlighting three for initial implementation. These 'Priority Projects' are less complex and likely less expensive than the longer term projects, yet individually they will have a significant impact on the attractiveness of the East Waterfront.

As a first step in implementing the Public Realm Strategy, the City should undertake a Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan for the East Waterfront that includes detailed designs and cost estimates for the Priority Projects. Concurrent with development of the master plan, site-specific risk assessments previously undertaken for the Transport Canada lands proposed for parkland should be updated to address current MOE guidelines and this CIP. The City should also continue discussions with Transport Canada on an appropriate environmental remediation strategy to be implemented prior to potential short-term or long-term acquisition of the lands.

# Public Realm Strategy

 Priority Projects

 Longer-term Projects











-  Welland St. Streetscape
-  Nickel Beach Amenities
-  Neighbourhood Streetscapes
-  Clarence/Welland/Durham Intersection
-  New Nickel Beach Entry and Parking
-  Lake Road Bike and Pedestrian Facilities
-  Welland Street Park South
-  Spit Destination
-  Spit Landscaping
-  Welland Street Park North



FIGURE 8: PROPOSED PUBLIC REALM PLAN



## Priority Projects

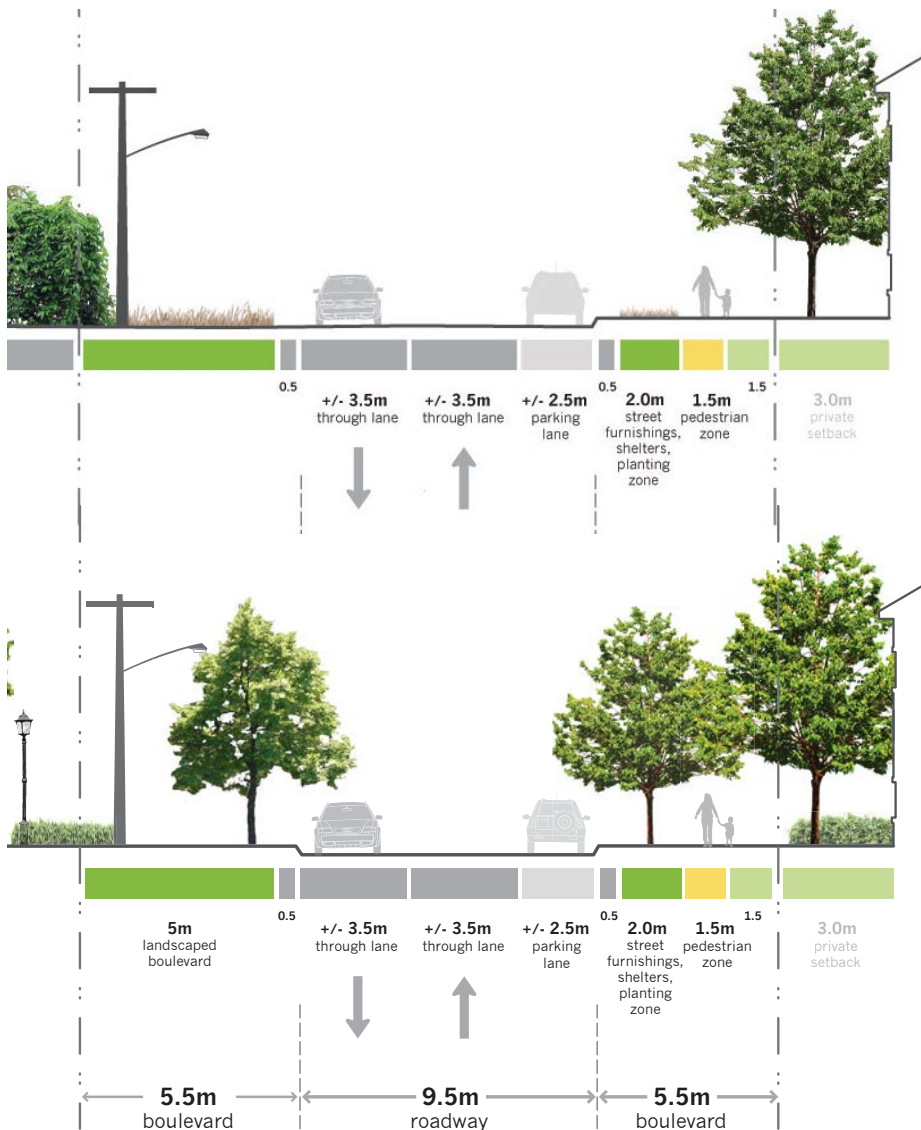


FIGURE 9: WELLAND STREET SECTIONS - EXISTING (TOP) AND PROPOSED

### 1. Welland Street Streetscape

Since Welland Street is the primary access road to the East Village neighbourhood and Nickel Beach, and also separates the Seaway-controlled industrial lands from the neighbourhood, improvements to its appearance will have a significant impact on the area. The proposed improvements include:

- repairs to sidewalks, curbs and the roadway, where needed;
- upgrading of storm sewer infrastructure, where needed;
- designation of the street as a bike route, with signage indicating as such;

- planting of street trees on both sides of the street, generally spaced 6-9 metres apart, on centre.

Figure 9 illustrates the existing and proposed cross-section for Welland Street. The addition of street trees will have the most dramatic impact on the streetscape, enhancing the buffer between the canal-side industrial activity and providing a more comfortable environment for pedestrians. With designation of Welland Street as a bike route to Nickel Beach, signage in Seaway Park and at the Clarence Street Bridge, should indicate this new side route to cyclists on the Welland Canal Trail.



## 2. Nickel Beach Amenities

To make Nickel Beach more inviting, not just in summer but year-round, the area surrounding the current entry point should be improved as a point of arrival and look-out that also offers amenities to complement the beach. In redesigning and reprogramming the area, the following components should be considered:

- A pavilion building that accommodates washrooms and change rooms, a sheltered sitting area and potentially space for seasonal concessions;
- Limited vehicle parking, including parking for disabled persons;
- Bicycle parking;
- Space for mobile vendors (e.g., a chip or ice cream truck);
- Picnic tables;
- Playground;
- A short boardwalk with benches;
- Interpretive displays that provide information about the area's heritage.



## 3. Neighbourhood Streetscapes

Improvements to Welland Street should be followed by improvements to the remaining streets of the East Village. As with Welland Street, the improvements should include repairs to sidewalks, curbs, roadways and storm sewers, where needed, and the planting of rows of trees in all boulevards. Figure 10 illustrates the existing and proposed cross-section for Nickel Street, and Figure 11 shows the existing and proposed cross-section for other streets in the neighbourhood. Except on Nickel Street, the width of roadways should be reduced to approximately 11 metres, to create wider boulevards that can accommodate street trees and sidewalks that are 1.5 metres wide.

Once the recommended Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan has determined the estimated cost of the improvements, the City can develop a phased approach to implementation that breaks up the overall initiative into affordable components.

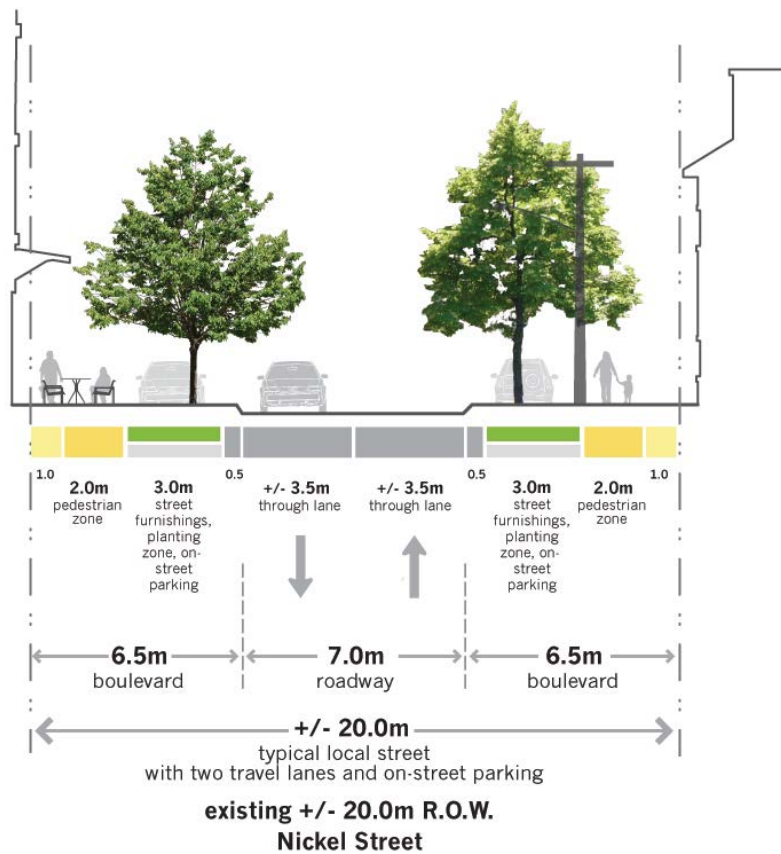
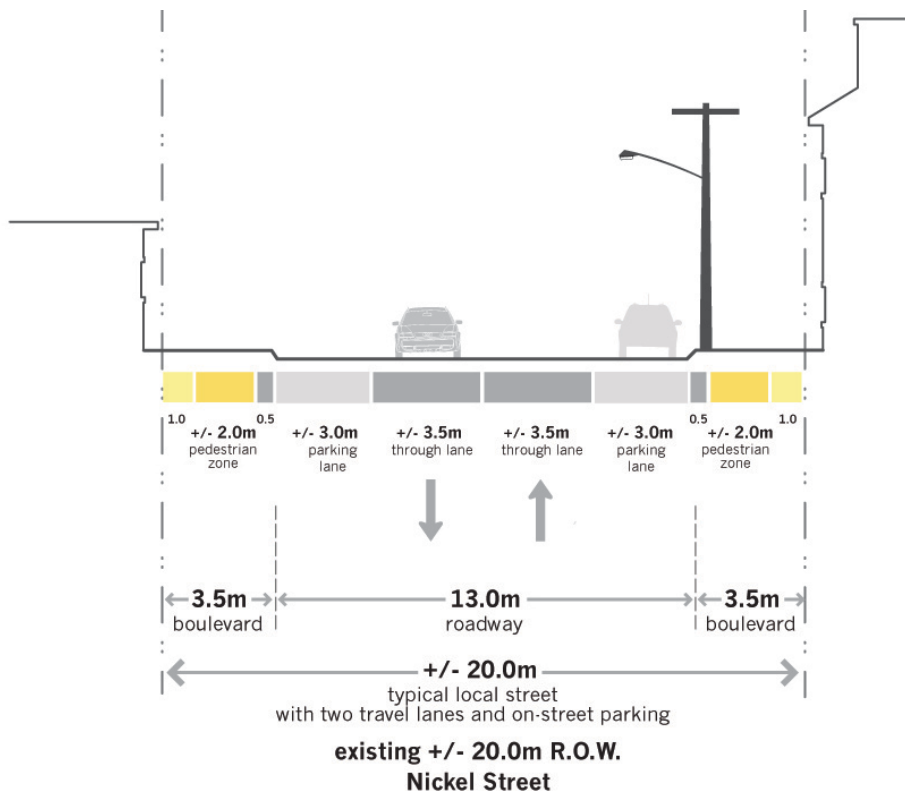


FIGURE 10: EXISTING AND PROPOSED NICKEL STREET CROSS SECTIONS



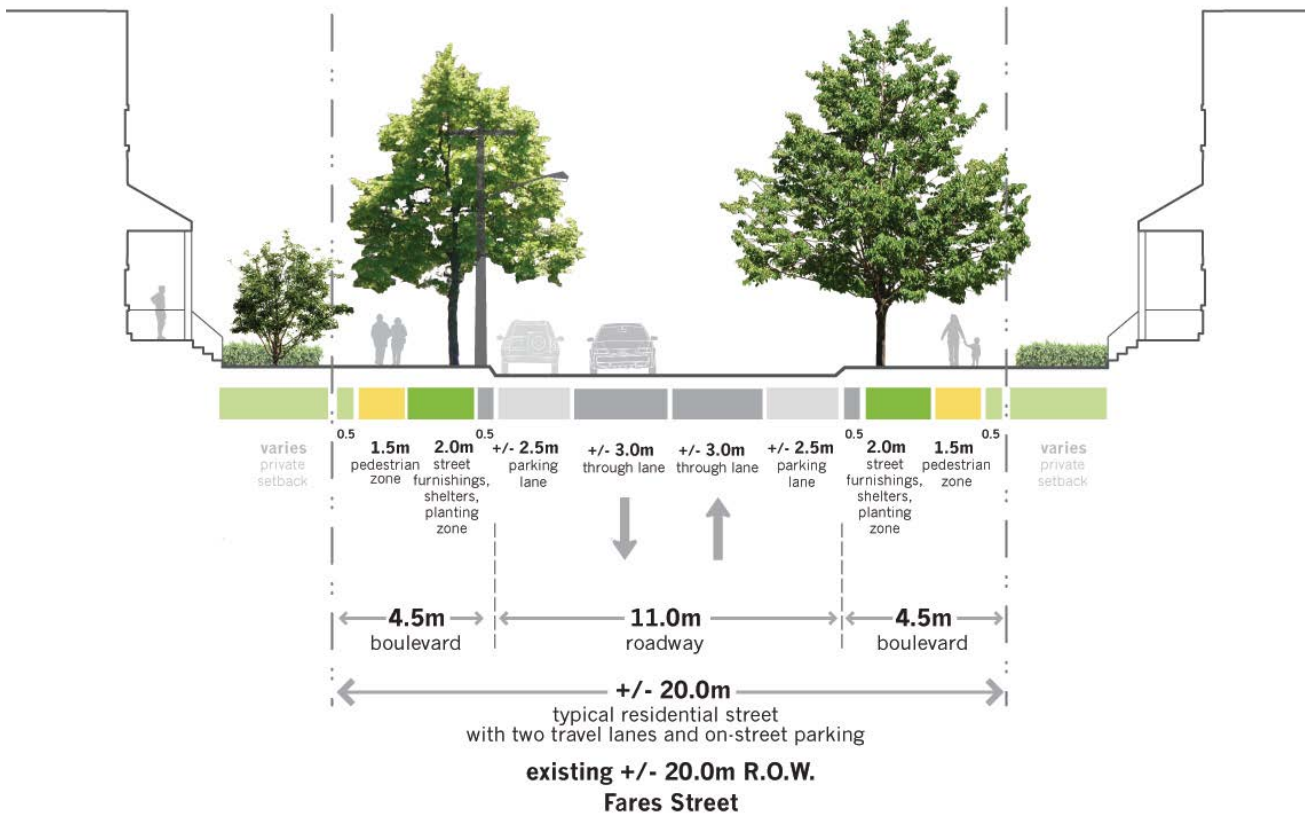
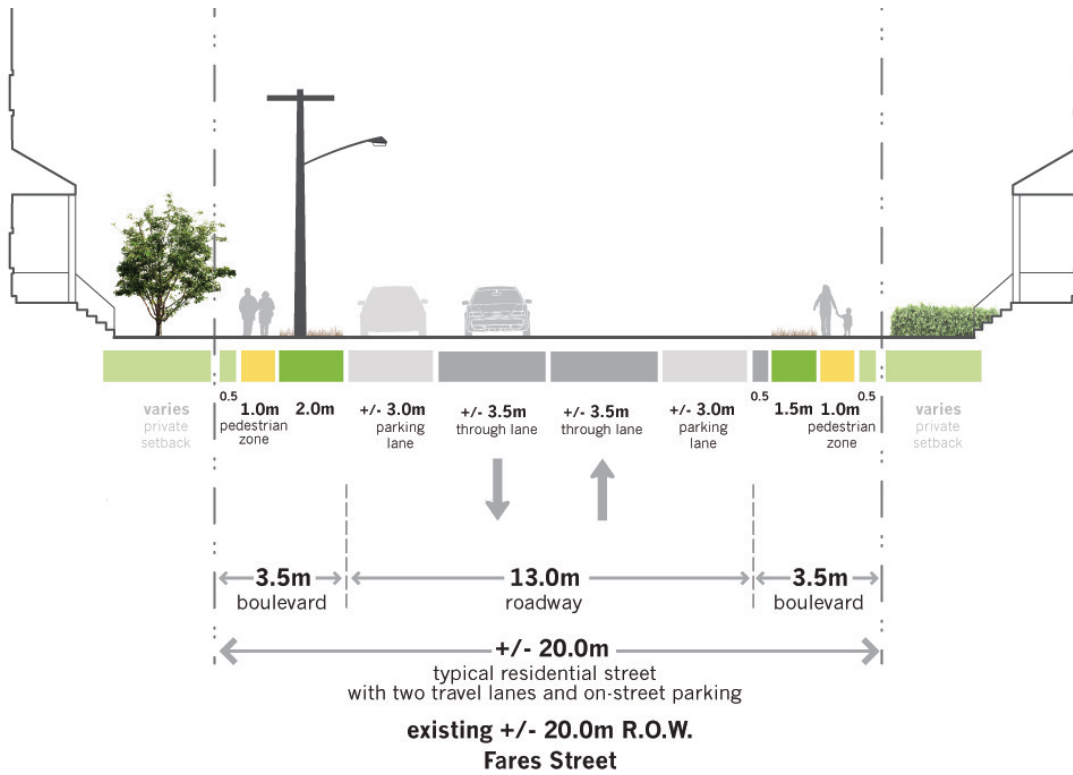


FIGURE 11: EXISTING AND PROPOSED NEIGHBOURHOOD STREET CROSS SECTIONS

## Longer Term Projects

### 4. Clarence/Welland/Durham Intersection

The intersection of Clarence Street, Welland Street and Durham Street should be improved to make the area feel more safe and inviting to pedestrians and cyclists, create a more attractive gateway to the East Village, and address any vehicular traffic issues stemming from the current configuration. The option of a roundabout that joins the four legs of the intersection should be considered. Improvements should include boulevard landscaping, directional signage to Nickel Beach and a sign identifying the neighbourhood.

If, in the short term, a rail spur line is re-introduced adjacent to Durham Street to service the Seaway lands south of Clarence Street, it may be appropriate to incorporate the spur line into an improved intersection, in which case this initiative may become a Priority Project.



### 5. New Nickel Beach Entry and Parking

The long-term vision for the East Waterfront calls for a new main access road to Nickel Beach across the spit. A slight realignment of Welland Street, south of Rodney Street, and Lake Drive should be considered to establish a direct flow into the new entry road. The road would terminate at a parking lot, from where a path will allow visitors to walk to the beach. Initially, a temporary gravel road and parking lot could be constructed to advance this project.



### 6. Lake Road Bike and Pedestrian Facilities

Portions of Lake Road as it approaches Nickel Beach are narrow. For the safety and comfort of cyclists and pedestrians, a recreational trail on the north side of the road or other bicycle/pedestrian facilities should be built.

### 7. Welland Street Park South

The park proposed on the west side of Welland Street is expected to be developed in two parts, given that the south half is currently owned by Transport Canada and the north half, an abandoned scrap yard, is privately owned. The two halves should be designed as one park, with the south half accommodating neighbourhood amenities, e.g., a playground, splash pad and/or skateboarding facilities. The park should be designed and programmed in consultation with East Village residents.

In addition to neighbourhood amenities, the park should accommodate a recreational trail that will replace the proposed bike route on Welland Street. A well-landscaped berm should be considered along the west edge of the park to create a buffer between industrial uses along the canal and park activities (the berm could also accommodate platforms for viewing ships).





### 8. Spit Destination

The proposed environmental park has the potential to accommodate a number of attractions. In the context of a master plan for the park, the City and Region should explore the feasibility of developing a facility that can accommodate educational activities, a cultural use and/or water-related recreational uses (e.g., canoe/kayak/sailing facilities). An elevated viewing platform would give people a unique vantage point to watch the lake, the gull nesting area, and ships entering and leaving the canal.



### 9. Spit Landscaping

Ultimately, the landscaping and naturalization that occurs on the spit will be the defining feature of the proposed environmental park. The planting of trees and other vegetation should proceed as soon as the soil on the spit has been remediated; however, landscaping could occur in phases, guided by a master plan that includes a network of trails. Appropriate measures to protect the gull nesting area will need to be included in the landscape design for the park.



### 10. Welland Street Park North

Since the north half of the site for the Welland Street Park is currently privately owned and almost certainly contaminated to levels above MOE guidelines for parkland, it is expected to be one of the last major public realm initiatives in the East Waterfront. As noted above, the design and programming of the north half should be coordinated with the plan for the south half. If it is not required for neighbourhood amenities, it could be considered for an outdoor cultural facility, such as a sculpture garden.



# 6 Financial Incentive Programs

Four of the nine community goals for the East Waterfront relate to the built environment—repairing and renovating homes, restoring and re-using significant buildings, improving streetscapes, and attracting new development to vacant properties. A revised land use plan and public realm improvements on their own cannot be expected to lead to repairs, restorations and redevelopment in the private realm. Financial incentives will be a critical tool for making building and site improvements affordable for property owners in the area and for enticing developers to initiate an infill project or redevelopment.

## 6.1 Approach

The financial incentive programs contained in this CIP were developed to help achieve a number of the community improvement goals for the CIP. The incentive programs contained in this section represent a comprehensive “tool kit” of programs specifically designed to encourage private sector investment, rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, redevelopment, and construction activity in the East Waterfront. In addition to the public realm improvements outlined in this CIP, the incentive programs will help achieve the Vision for the East Waterfront.

Prior to development of the incentive programs for the East Waterfront CIP, the incentive programs contained in the Olde Humberstone Main Street Area CIP, the Downtown CBD CIP and the Brownfield CIP were reviewed to determine which of these programs may be applicable and appropriate for the East Waterfront CIP. Drawing on the incentive programs in these CIPs and best practices in other municipalities, a number of preliminary incentive programs (including priority ratings) were developed for the East Waterfront CIP. These preliminary incentive programs were then presented at a workshop held on September 12, 2011 with senior City staff, the ward councillors and area business, resident and other representatives. Based on the comments and input provided by those in attendance at the workshop, the preliminary incentive programs (including priority ratings) were revised and refined.

The incentive programs contained in the CIP are referred to as a “toolkit” because once the CIP is adopted and approved, the incentive programs in the CIP can be activated by Council, one or more at a time, based on Council approval of the implementation of each program, subject to the availability of funding. The programs are also referred to as a “toolkit” because once activated, these programs can be used individually or together by an applicant.

General requirements that apply to all the programs contained in this CIP and program specific requirements have been included in this CIP to help ensure that the Vision for the East Waterfront will be achieved while protecting the financial interests of the City of Port Colborne. Table 2 provides a summary of the following incentive programs contained in this CIP, including the priority and rank for program implementation:

- 1) Urban Design Study Grant Program;
- 2) Commercial/Mixed Use Building and Facade Improvement Grant/Loan Program;
- 3) Residential Intensification and Rehabilitation Grant/Loan Program;
- 4) Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program;
- 5) Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant Program; and
- 6) Planning and Building Permit Fees Grant Program.

TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

Program	Description	Regional Participation (current as of date of CIP)	Recommended Program Duration <sup>1</sup>	Implementation Priority and Rank
<b>1. Urban Design Study Grant Program</b>	<b>Grant</b> equal to 50% of cost of urban design study and/or professional architectural/design drawing(s) to a maximum grant of \$1,750 per property/project	N/A	Approximately ten (10) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.	Medium - 6
<b>2. Commercial/Mixed Use Building and Facade Improvement Grant/Loan Program</b>	<b>Façade Improvement Grant</b> equal to 50% of cost of front facade and storefront improvement/restoration works to maximum grant per property/project of \$10,000. Maximum grant can be increased by \$5,000 for properties designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. At discretion of Council, a separate grant equal to 50% of cost of eligible side and/or rear facade improvement/restoration works to a maximum grant of \$5,000 per property/project.  <b>Building Improvement Grant</b> equal to 70% of cost of interior and exterior building improvement works to a maximum grant of \$10,000 per property/project; <b>OR</b> <b>Building Improvement Loan</b> equal to 70% of cost of interior and exterior building improvement works to a maximum loan of \$20,000 per property/project.	Region will match City grant for front facade improvement and/or City grant or loan for building improvement to a maximum of \$10,000 from the Region.  Region will match City grant for side and/or rear facade improvement/restoration works to a maximum of \$10,000 from the Region.	Approximately ten (10) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.	High - 2
<b>3. Residential Intensification and Rehabilitation Grant/Loan Program</b>	<b>Residential Intensification Grant</b> equal to \$10 per sq.ft. of residential space renovated or created to a maximum grant of \$10,000 per unit and a maximum of 4 units per property/project (maximum grant per property/project is \$40,000); <b>OR</b> <b>Residential Intensification Loan</b> equal to \$15 per sq.ft. of residential space renovated or created to a maximum loan of \$15,000 per unit and a maximum of 4 units per property/project (maximum loan per property/project is \$60,000)  <b>Residential Rehabilitation Grant</b> equal to 50% of cost of exterior building maintenance and property improvement works to single and multi-unit residential properties with maximum two (2) applications per property, and maximum total grant per property of \$12,500.	Region will match City grant to a maximum of \$7,500 per unit from the Region.  Region will match City loan to a maximum of \$10,000 per unit from the Region.	Approximately ten (10) years subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.	High - 1
<b>4. Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program</b>	<b>Grant</b> equal to \$10 per sq.ft. of affordable residential space created to a maximum grant of \$10,000 per unit and a maximum of 4 units per property/project (maximum grant per property/project is \$40,000); <b>OR</b> <b>Loan</b> equal to \$15 per sq.ft. of affordable residential space created to a maximum grant of \$15,000 per unit and a maximum of 4 units per property/project (maximum loan per property/project is \$60,000)	Region will match City grant or loan to a maximum of \$7,500 per unit from the Region.	Approximately ten (10) years subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.	Medium - 4
<b>5. Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant Program</b>	<b>Annual Grant</b> equal to 80% of the increase in municipal property taxes for up to 10 years after project completion. The project must result in an increase in assessment and property taxes.	Region will match the percentage of the City grant for the same time period.	Approximately ten (10) years.	Medium - 5
<b>6. Planning and Building Fees Grant Program</b>	<b>Grant</b> equal to 100% of the fees paid on planning/development applications, building permits and sign permits to a maximum total grant of \$5,000 per property/project.	N/A	Approximately five (5) years, with option to extend for five (5) years, subject to availability of funding as approved by Council.	High - 3

<sup>1</sup> Council may reduce or extend the program duration of any or all of the programs beyond what is shown without amendment to the CIP.





## 6.2 General Program Requirements

All of the financial incentive programs contained in this CIP are subject to the following general requirements as well as the individual requirements specified under each program. The general and program specific requirements contained in this CIP are not necessarily exhaustive and the City reserves the right to include other requirements and conditions as deemed necessary on a property specific basis:

- a) Application for any of the incentive programs contained in this Plan can be made only for properties within the East Waterfront Community Improvement Project Area;
- b) With the exception of the Planning and Building Fees Grant Program, an application for any financial incentive program contained in this CIP must be submitted to the City prior to the commencement of any works to which the financial incentive program will apply and prior to application for building permit;
- c) If the applicant is not the owner of the property, the applicant must provide written consent from the owner of the property to make the application;
- d) An application for any financial incentive program contained in this CIP must include plans, estimates, contracts, reports and other details as required by the City to satisfy the City with respect to costs of the project and conformity of the project with the CIP;
- e) Review and evaluation of an application and supporting materials against program eligibility requirements will be done by City staff, who will then make a recommendation to City Council or Council's designate. The application is subject to approval by City Council or Council's designate;
- f) Each program in this CIP is considered active if Council has approved implementation of the program, and Council has approved a budget allocation for the program (as applicable);
- g) As a condition of application approval, the applicant may be required to enter into a loan or grant agreement with the City. This Agreement will specify the terms, duration and default provisions of the incentive to be provided. This Agreement is also subject to approval by City Council or Council's designate;
- h) Where other sources of government and/or non-profit organization funding (Federal, Provincial, Municipal, CMHC, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, etc...) that can be applied against the eligible costs are anticipated or have been secured, these must be declared as part of the application. Accordingly, the grant/loan may be reduced on a pro-rated basis;
- i) The City reserves the right to audit the cost of any and all works that have been approved under any of the financial incentive programs, at the expense of the applicant;
- j) The City is not responsible for any costs incurred by an applicant in relation to any of the programs, including without limitation, costs incurred in anticipation of a grant and/or loan;
- k) If the applicant is in default of any of the general or program specific requirements, or any other requirements of the City, the City may delay, reduce or cancel the approved grant and/or loan, and require repayment of the approved grant and/or loan;
- l) The City may discontinue any of the programs contained in this CIP at any time, but applicants with approved grants and/or loans will still receive said grant and/or loan, subject to meeting the general and program specific requirements, and applicants with approved loans will still be required to repay their loans in full;
- m) All proposed works approved under the financial incentive programs and associated improvements to buildings and/or land must conform to any Design Guidelines put in place by the City, or the Region's Model Urban Design Guidelines, and all other City guidelines, by-laws, policies, procedures, and standards;
- n) All works completed must comply with the description of the works as provided in the application form and contained in the program agreement, with any amendments as approved by the City;
- o) Existing and proposed land uses must be in conformity with applicable Official Plan(s), Zoning By-law and other planning requirements and approvals at both the local and regional level;

## 6.3 Urban Design Study Grant Program

- p) All improvements made to buildings and/or land shall be made pursuant to a Building Permit, and/or other required permits, and constructed in accordance with the Ontario Building Code and all applicable zoning requirements and planning approvals;
- q) When required by the City, outstanding work orders, and/or orders or requests to comply, and/or other charges from the City must be satisfactorily addressed prior to grant and/or loan approval/payment;
- r) Property taxes must be in good standing at the time of program application and throughout the entire length of the grant/loan commitment;
- s) City staff, officials, and/or agents of the City may inspect any property that is the subject of an application for any of the financial incentive programs offered by the City;
- t) Eligible applicants can apply for one, more or all of the incentive programs contained in this CIP and incentive programs contained in other applicable CIPs, e.g., the Brownfield CIP. However, no “double dipping” will be permitted, i.e., no two incentive programs may be used to pay for the same eligible cost;
- u) In order to avoid double dipping between the Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant Program contained in this CIP and the Brownfield Rehabilitation Grant (Tax Increment) Grant Program available under the Brownfield CIP, application can be made for only one of these grant programs, per property, site or project.
- v) The total of all grants, loans and tax assistance provided in respect of the particular property for which an applicant is making application under the programs contained in this CIP and any other applicable CIPs shall not exceed the eligible cost of the improvements to that property under all applicable CIPs.

### 6.3.1 Purpose

To help offset the costs of preparing professional urban design studies and architectural/ design drawings required by the City.

### 6.3.2 Description

This program will provide a matching grant of 50% of the cost of preparing professional urban design studies and architectural/design drawings required by the City to a maximum grant per property/project of \$1,750. Only one Urban Design Study Grant application per property/project will be allowed.

### 6.3.3 Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

- a) All studies/drawings must be submitted to the City in electronic and hard copy format for the City’s review and retention; and,
- b) All studies/drawings must be to the satisfaction of the City and must meet the City’s applicable Design Guidelines and any other City guidelines, by-laws, policies, procedures, and standards.

## 6.4 Commercial/Mixed Use Building and Façade Improvement Grant/Loan Program

### 6.4.1 Purpose

To promote the rehabilitation, restoration and improvement of the front, rear and side façades of commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings, including retail storefront display areas and signage.

To promote the maintenance and physical improvement of existing commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings and properties, in order to improve the attractiveness of the Project Area and provide safe and usable commercial, institutional and mixed use space.

### 6.4.2 Description

This program contains two components. First, the City can offer a grant for the **Façade Improvement** component. Second, the City can offer a grant or a loan for the **Building Improvement** component. Both program components are described below. An applicant may apply for the Façade Improvement component, the Building Improvement component, or both, so long as both programs are not used for the same eligible work.

#### 6.4.2.1 Façade Improvement Component

The **Façade Improvement** component of the program will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible front facade and storefront improvement and restoration works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum grant per property/project of \$10,000. At the discretion of Council, the maximum grant can be increased by up to \$5,000 per property/project for properties/projects that are also designated under the Ontario Heritage Act.

At the discretion of Council, a separate grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible side and/or rear facade improvement and restoration works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum grant per property/project of \$5,000 may be provided where said rear and/or side façades are highly visible.

#### 6.4.2.2 Building Improvement Component

The **Building Improvement** component of the program may be offered by the City in the form of a grant or a loan.

If offered as a grant, the Building Improvement component of the program will provide a grant equal to 70% of the cost of eligible interior and exterior building and maintenance

improvement works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum grant per property/project of \$10,000.

If offered as a loan, the Building Improvement component of the program will provide a no interest loan equal to 70% of the cost of eligible interior and exterior building and maintenance improvement works to commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings up to a maximum loan per property/project of \$20,000. The minimum loan per building/property will be \$2,000.

The loan will be repayable in equal monthly payments over 5 years and a lump sum payment of outstanding funds at the end of the 5-year term. The City will require that security for the loan be registered against title of the property. If the City determines that the “as constructed” project conforms to applicable City Design Guidelines and the project description contained in the approved application, the City may forgive up to 30% of the loan amount.

### 6.4.3 Program Requirements

#### 6.4.3.1 Façade Improvement Component

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under the **Façade Improvement** component of this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

- a) The following types of building façade restoration and improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings are considered eligible for a grant under the Façade Improvement component of this program:
  - i) repair or replacement of storefront, including repair or replacement of storefront doors and windows;
  - ii) repair or repointing of facade masonry and brickwork;
  - iii) repair or replacement of cornices, parapets, eaves and other architectural details;
  - iv) repair or replacement of awnings or canopies;
  - v) facade painting and cleaning/treatments;



- vi) addition of new lighting/upgrading of existing fixtures on exterior facade and in entrance and storefront display areas;
  - vii) installation/improvement of signage (as permitted by the Sign By-law);
  - viii) landscaping, including plant materials (to a maximum of 15% of the approved grant amount);
  - ix) architectural/design fees required for eligible works (to a maximum of 10% of the grant amount);
  - x) other similar repairs/improvements as may be approved; and,
  - xi) items i) to x) above as they apply to side facades and rear facades that are highly visible.
- b) In addition to the eligible costs specified in a) above, the following types of building façade restoration and improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* are also considered eligible for a grant under the Façade Improvement component of this program:
- i) works that conserve or enhance elements specified in the Reasons for Designation accompanying the designating by-law under the Ontario Heritage Act;
  - ii) original siding and roofing materials including repair and replacement where necessary of wood clapboard or board-and-batten, repair and repointing of masonry buildings, stucco repair, repair or replacement of original roofing materials (slate, wood shingles, tile, etc.);
  - iii) removal of modern materials and replacement with documented original materials;
  - iv) reconstruction or construction of former and significant architectural features for which the appearance can be clearly determined from documentary sources (photographs, drawings, etc.);
  - v) cleaning of masonry buildings if it is necessary for the building's preservation;
  - vi) all final finishes, such as paint and masonry are eligible for funding subject to approval; and,

vii) works required to maintain or preserve significant architectural features.

- c) For commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings designated under the Ontario Heritage Act, the facade restoration and improvement works should be supported by documentation in the form of historic photographs or drawings clearly showing the feature(s) to be restored or reconstructed.

#### 6.4.3.2 Building Improvement Component

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under the **Building Improvement** component of this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

- a) The following types of building maintenance and improvement works on commercial, institutional and mixed use buildings are considered eligible for a grant or a loan under the Building Improvement component of this program:
  - i) entrance modifications to provide barrier-free accessibility
  - ii) installation/upgrading of fire protection systems;
  - iii) repair/replacement of roof;
  - iv) structural repairs to walls, ceilings, floors and foundations;
  - v) water/flood/weatherproofing;
  - vi) repair/replacement of windows and doors;
  - vii) extension/upgrading of plumbing and electrical services for the creation of retail, office or residential space;
  - viii) installation/alteration of required window openings to residential spaces;
  - ix) improvements to heating and ventilation systems;
  - x) parking lot/area improvements including paving, line markings, landscaping and consolidation of access and egress points;

## 6.5 Residential Intensification and Rehabilitation Grant/Loan Program

- xi) construction or improvement of a sidewalk café (to a maximum grant or loan of \$2,000)
  - xii) other similar repairs/improvements related to health and safety issues, as may be approved.
- b) As a condition of loan approval, the City may require the applicant to:
- i) post such security as may be required to secure a commercial loan, including registration of such security against title of the property; and,
  - ii) meet specific insurance terms to protect the municipality's interests.
- c) If during the loan period, a building receiving a loan is demolished, all loan advances from the City shall cease, and all loan advances already made by the City will be repayable to the City; and,
- d) If during the loan period, a building designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* receiving a loan is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reasons for designation, all loan advances from the City shall cease, and all loan advances already made by the City will be repayable to the City.

### 6.5.1 Purpose

To promote the renovation of existing residential and construction of new residential units through;

- a) Renovations to existing residential units in mixed use buildings;
- b) Conversion of excess commercial and vacant space on upper stories of commercial and mixed use building to residential units;
- c) residential intensification; and,
- d) the infilling of vacant lots with new residential units.

To promote the rehabilitation (maintenance and improvement) of existing single detached and multi-unit residential properties.

This program is not intended for the conversion of ground floor commercial space to residential use.

### 6.5.2 Description

This program contains two components. First, the City can offer a grant or a loan for the **Residential Intensification** component (Items 6.5.1 a) – d) above). Second, the City can offer a grant for the **Residential Rehabilitation** component (maintenance and improvement) of existing single detached and multi-unit residential properties.

#### 6.5.2.1 Residential Intensification Component

The **Residential Intensification** component of the program may be offered by the City in the form of a grant or a loan.

If offered as a grant, the Residential Intensification component of the program will provide a grant equal to the cost of renovating existing residential units and/or constructing new residential units on the basis of \$10 per square foot of habitable floor space renovated or constructed, to a maximum grant of \$10,000 per unit, and a maximum of 4 units per property/project (total maximum grant of \$40,000 per property/project).

If offered as a loan, the Residential Intensification component of the program will provide a 0% interest loan on the basis of \$15 per square foot of habitable floor space renovated or constructed, to a maximum loan of \$15,000 per unit, and a maximum of 4 units per property/project (total maximum loan of \$60,000 per property/project). The loan will be repayable in equal monthly payments over 5 years and a lump sum payment of outstanding funds at the end of the 5-year term.

Whether offered as a grant or a loan, the Residential Intensification component of the program can be used for rental or ownership units. If used for ownership units, the grant/loan may apply to buildings that fall under the Condominium Act.

The Grant will be paid once all construction is complete and the City has conducted all final inspections.

If the loan is used for ownership units, upon closing of the sale of any unit, the loan for that unit will be due in full. If the unit is a rental unit, the loan term is the full 5 years, but the loan may be repaid early without penalty.

#### 6.5.2.2 Residential Rehabilitation Component

The Residential Rehabilitation component of the program will provide a grant equal to 50% of the cost of eligible exterior building maintenance and property improvement works to single and multi-unit residential properties. The minimum grant per property will be \$1,000 or greater value as determined by the City, with a maximum of two (2) applications per property, and a maximum total grant per property of \$12,500.

### 6.5.3 Program Requirements

#### 6.5.3.1 Residential Intensification Component

Applicants are eligible to apply for the **Residential Intensification** component of funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

- a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for a grant/loan under the Residential Intensification component of this program:

- i) renovations to existing residential units in a mixed use building to bring these units into compliance with the Building Code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code;
- ii) existing commercial or mixed use building where two or more net residential units are created; and,
- iii) vacant lot (including parking lots) converting to mixed use or residential use where two or more net residential units are created.

- b) The City may require the applicant to submit for approval impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind).

- c) As a condition of loan approval, the City may require the applicant to:

- i) post such security as may be required to secure a commercial loan, including registration of such security against title of the property; and,
- ii) meet specific insurance terms to protect the municipality's interests.

- d) If during the loan period, a building receiving a Residential Intensification Loan is demolished, all loan advances from the City shall cease, and all loan advances already made by the City will be repayable to the City; and,

- e) If during the loan period, a building designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* receiving a Residential Intensification Loan is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reasons for designation, all loan advances from the City shall cease, and all loan advances already made by the City will be repayable to the City.

#### 6.5.3.2 Residential Rehabilitation Component

Applicants are eligible to apply for the **Residential Rehabilitation** component of funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

- a) The following types of exterior building maintenance and property improvement works are considered eligible for a matching grant under this program:



## 6.6 Affordable Housing Grant/ Loan Program

- i) cleaning, painting, repair or replacement of exterior facade materials;
  - ii) repair/replacement of front doors, windows and porches;
  - iii) repair/replacement of cornices, parapets, eaves and other architectural details;
  - iv) landscaping, including walkways and permanent plant materials (to a maximum 15% of the grant amount); and,
  - v) other similar repairs/improvements as may be approved.
- b) All eligible works must be visible from the road right-of-way and must be acceptable to and approved by the City.

### 6.6.1 Purpose

To promote the renovation of existing residential units to affordable residential units and the construction of new affordable residential units through;

- a) Renovations to existing residential units in mixed use buildings to create affordable residential units that are in compliance with the Building Code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code;
- b) Conversion of excess commercial and/or vacant space on upper stories of commercial and mixed use building to one or more net affordable residential units; and,
- c) the infilling of vacant lots with two or more net affordable residential units.

### 6.6.2 Description

The program may be offered in the form of a grant or a loan.

The program can be used for rental or ownership units.

Eligible applicants creating affordable residential units can make application for both the Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program and the Residential Intensification and Rehabilitation Grant/Loan Program for said affordable residential units, subject to meeting the program requirements.

The Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program will only be offered by the City in the future if Niagara Region offers a matching grant/loan program for affordable residential units to local municipalities.<sup>1</sup> The definition of “affordable” (rental rate/sale price of unit) to be utilized by the City in implementation of its Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program will correspond to the definition of “affordable” as required or recommended by the Region in its Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program.

#### 6.6.2.1 Grant Program

The **Affordable Housing Grant Program** will provide a grant equal to the cost of rehabilitating existing residential units into affordable residential units and/or constructing new affordable residential units on the basis of \$10 per square foot of habitable floor space rehabilitated or constructed, to

<sup>1</sup> The Region’s Smarter Niagara Incentive Programs are currently being reviewed and one of the new programs under consideration is an Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program. If Niagara Region offers a matching grant/loan program for affordable residential units to local municipalities in the future, this in no way obligates the City to offer an Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program.

a maximum grant of \$10,000 per unit, and a maximum of 4 units per property/project (total maximum grant of \$40,000 per property/project).

#### 6.6.2.2 Loan Program

The **Affordable Housing Loan Program** will provide a no interest loan on the basis of \$15 per square foot of habitable floor space rehabilitated or constructed, to a maximum loan of \$15,000 per unit, and a maximum of 4 units per property/project (total maximum loan of \$60,000 per property/project). The loan will be repayable in equal monthly payments over 5 years and a lump sum payment of outstanding funds at the end of the 5-year term. The City will require that security for the loan be registered against title of the property.

#### 6.6.3 Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

- a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for a grant/loan under this program:
  - i) renovations to existing residential units in a mixed use building to create affordable residential units that are in compliance with the Building Code, Property Standards By-law and the Fire Code;
  - ii) conversion of excess commercial and/or vacant space on upper stories of commercial and mixed use building to one or more net affordable residential units;
  - iii) vacant lots (including parking lots) converting to mixed use or residential use where two or more net affordable residential units are created;
- b) The City may require the applicant to submit for approval impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind);

c) In order to ensure that the residential units created remain affordable, as a condition of grant or loan approval, the City may require the applicant to post such security as may be required, including registration of such security against title of the property;

d) As a condition of loan approval, the City may require the applicant to:

- i) post such security as may be required to secure a commercial loan, including registration of such security against title of the property; and,
- ii) meet specific insurance terms to protect the municipality's interests.

e) If during the loan period, a building receiving a loan is demolished, all loan advances from the City shall cease, and all loan advances already made by the City will be repayable to the City; and,

f) If during the loan period, a building designated under the Ontario Heritage Act receiving a loan is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reasons for designation, all loan advances from the City shall cease, and all loan advances already made by the City will be repayable to the City.

## 6.7 Revitalization (Tax Increment) Grant

### 6.7.1 Purpose

To encourage and support rehabilitation, redevelopment, infill and intensification projects by providing a financial incentive that reduces the property tax increase that can result from these various types of development. This incentive is also designed to assist in securing project financing.

### 6.7.2 Description

This program will provide a tax increment based grant equivalent to 80% of the municipal (City and Region) property tax increase for up to 10 years following completion of an eligible project where that project creates an increase in assessment, and therefore an increase in property taxes. The grant will be paid annually once the eligible project is complete, building inspection has taken place, the property has been reassessed, and the new property taxes have been paid in full for the year.

Pre-project Municipal taxes will be determined before commencement of the project at the time the application is approved. For purposes of the grant calculation, the increase in Municipal taxes will be calculated as the difference between pre-project Municipal taxes and post-project Municipal taxes that are levied as a result of re-valuation of the property by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) following project completion. The grant will be recalculated every year based on post-project Municipal taxes in that year. Grant payments will cease when the total grant along with all other grants and loans provided equals the cost of rehabilitating the lands and buildings, or after 10 years, whichever comes first.

### 6.7.3 Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements and the following program requirements:

- a) The following types of projects are considered eligible for this program:
  - i) existing commercial, residential and mixed use buildings, vacant properties and parking lots where the redevelopment or rehabilitation project results in an increase in the assessed value and taxes on the property<sup>1</sup>;

- b) The City may require the applicant to submit a Business Plan, with said plan to the municipality's satisfaction;
- c) The City may require the applicant to submit for approval impact studies such as traffic studies and studies of microclimatic conditions (sun, shadow, wind);
- d) If during the grant period, a building receiving a Revitalization Grant is demolished, all grant payments shall cease and the City reserves the right to require repayment of the grant payments; and,
- e) If during the grant period, a building/property designated under the *Ontario Heritage Act* receiving a Revitalization Grant is demolished or any of the heritage features are altered in any way that would compromise the reasons for designation, all grant payments shall cease and the City reserves the right to require repayment of the grant payments.

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<sup>1</sup> This program does not apply to any residential project that creates less than two net residential units.



## 6.8 Planning and Building Fees Grant Program

### 6.8.1 Purpose

To facilitate and spur adaptive re-use, infill, intensification, and redevelopment through the provision of an additional financial incentive that will complement and augment the other incentive programs within the CIP.

### 6.8.2 Description

This program will provide a grant equal to 100% of the fee paid on planning and development applications, building permits and sign permits to a maximum total grant of \$5,000 per property/project. The Planning and Building Fees Grant will be paid after all construction is complete and the City has conducted all final building inspections.

### 6.8.3 Program Requirements

Applicants are eligible to apply for funding under this program, subject to meeting the general program requirements, the following program requirements, and subject to the availability of funding as approved by Council:

- a) The following types of planning and development applications and building permits are considered eligible for this program:
  - i) Official Plan amendment;
  - ii) Zoning By-law amendment;
  - iii) Minor Variance;
  - iv) Consent to Sever;
  - v) Site Plan Control and Development Agreements;
  - vi) Plan of Subdivision/Condominium;
  - vii) Parkland Dedication Fee;
  - viii) Rental Housing Protection Act;
  - ix) Sign Permit;
  - x) Sidewalk Café Permit;
  - xi) Encroachment Agreement;
  - xii) Demolition Permit; and,
  - xiii) Building Permit.

Other permits issued by the City that are not listed above, but which advance the purpose of this program, may be considered. This program does not apply to security deposits or cash-in-lieu payments.

# 7 Implementation

This section summarizes the key actions and potential mechanisms to implement the recommended improvements in the East Waterfront. Some of the actions have been introduced in previous sections and therefore are only briefly discussed below.

## 7.1 Financial Incentive Programs

Section 6 proposes and describes a set of financial incentive programs for the East Waterfront. The programs have been crafted in consultation with City staff and community representatives with the primary intent of stimulating reinvestment in East Village homes and commercial buildings. As the Community Improvement Plans for the Olde Humberstone Main Street Area and Downtown CBD have demonstrated, incentives like these can have an almost immediate and positive impact on the character and economic vitality of an area. The implementation of the recommended programs in Section 7 should be the City's highest priority flowing from this CIP.

To ensure the incentive programs are effective, their success in attracting applications, leveraging private investment and physically improving the East Waterfront should be monitored regularly. Feedback from users of the programs and property owners in the area generally should inform appropriate adjustments to the programs, including the addition of new ones and the discontinuation of existing ones. The incentive programs in Section 7 may be activated or de-activated by Council without amendment to this plan. However, increases in funding provided by the programs or the addition of new programs will require an amendment to the plan.

## 7.2 Reductions to Development Charges

As a further financial incentive for new development, it is recommended the City adopt an amendment to its Development Charges By-law that provides for a 100% development charge reduction for development in the East Waterfront Community Improvement Project Area.

The City should also request that the Region amend its

Development Charges By-law to include the Port Colborne East Waterfront Community Improvement Project Area as an eligible designated central urban area under the Region's Development Charge Reduction Program.

## 7.3 Official Plan and Zoning Amendments

Concurrent with adoption of this Community Improvement Plan, City Council should adopt a Secondary Plan for the East Waterfront. Appendix B contains a Draft Secondary Plan that reflects the goals of this document and, if adopted, would implement its recommendations regarding land use and urban design. The effect of the Secondary Plan would be to amend the Official Plan's land use map to be consistent with the land use framework in Section 5.1 of this document and to add a Strategic Planning Policy highlighting the intent to create over time a unique and regionally-significant network of open spaces and trails in the East Waterfront.

Following adoption of the Secondary Plan, the City's Zoning By-law should be amended to be consistent with the land use designations and policies of the Secondary Plan.

## 7.4 East Waterfront Streetscape and Open Space Plan

As discussed in Section 5.2, an important next step in planning the East Waterfront is to prepare a more detailed Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan. The master plan should include detailed designs and cost estimates for the Priority Projects. It should also include conceptual designs, guidelines and preliminary order-of-magnitude cost estimates for the longer-term projects.

## 7.5 Capital Planning

Once the City has more detailed information about the scope, design and cost of the Priority Projects from the Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan, it should incorporate them into the City's Capital Plan within realistic timeframes for implementation. Projects with a large scope and potentially high costs may need to be broken up into series of smaller projects implemented over multiple years.

## 7.6 Site Specific Risk Assessments, Environmental Remediation and Land Acquisition

In parallel with the above actions, the City should continue discussions with Transport Canada on a strategy leading to potential acquisition of the proposed parkland in the East Waterfront by the City and potentially Niagara Region or the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. An important step in the process will be to update the site-specific risk assessments for the lands and initiate remediation of the lands, informed by this CIP and the Streetscape and Open Space Master Plan.

## 7.7 Partnerships and Funding Sources

Given the significant extent of public realm improvements proposed for the East Waterfront, it is likely the City will need to find partners to help implement and maintain them. Niagara Region and/or the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, or potentially the Province or Federal Government, may be an appropriate partner to assist in developing and maintaining the proposed environmental park on the spit. Sponsorship agreements with major employers in the City or elsewhere in the Region may also assist in implementing specific elements of the proposed open spaces, e.g., trails, other park facilities, buildings and public art.

There are a number of potential funding sources at the federal and provincial levels of government for municipal infrastructure projects and private development on brownfield sites. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) administers the Green Municipal Fund program, which can be used for feasibility studies and capital projects on brownfield sites. The program offers below-market loans covering up to 80% of eligible project costs to implement capital projects. The loan maximum is \$10 million. The fund may also cover up to 50% of study costs, to a maximum of \$350,000.

The Province of Ontario, through Infrastructure Ontario and the ministries of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Culture,

and Finance, offers a range of financing programs to assist with infrastructure projects and brownfield remediation and redevelopment. Links to more information on these programs can be found on the FCM's web site: [http://fmv.fcm.ca/Capacity\\_Building/Brownfields/Brownfields-funding-resources.asp](http://fmv.fcm.ca/Capacity_Building/Brownfields/Brownfields-funding-resources.asp).

## 7.8 Marketing and Promotion

As improvements in the East Waterfront are planned and implemented, there is a potential role for the East Waterfront to play within the City's broader economic development strategy. The greening of the waterfront will result in new visitor destinations, and preserving and celebrating elements of the area's heritage will help to draw more "geo-tourists" to Port Colborne, i.e., tourists seeking authentic places. In addition, Port Colborne has a strong arts community and should continue to promote itself as an artists' colony. The East Village, given its affordable housing and proximity to the lake, the canal and downtown, has the potential to attract artists and craftspeople of all ages. At the first sign of the East Waterfront renewing itself, if not before, the City should begin to promote its assets and its opportunities.



# Appendix A

## Summary of Smarter Niagara Incentive Programs



# Summary of Smarter Niagara Incentive Programs

The Smarter Niagara Incentive Programs were endorsed by Regional Council in 2002. Efforts have been ongoing to implement the programs since 2002 with the Region budgeting considerable funds for their implementation. The Region has established that it will provide a matching proportionate share of any financial incentive offered by an area municipality through a local CIP, subject to a maximum share from the Region as specified in the Smarter Niagara Incentive Programs. The Region and area municipalities in Niagara have established a Region/Area Municipality Incentive Coordinating Committee to coordinate the provision of the incentives through local community improvement plans.

The Smarter Niagara Incentives Programs have been revised over the years. The Region completed a major review and update of the programs in 2011, and Council approved a number of revisions and additions in December 2011. The programs are described below.

## Reduction of Regional Development Charges

In designated central urban areas and on brownfield sites, the Region offers a reduction of 50% of the Regional development charge for new residential, commercial or institutional development or conversion of existing buildings to those uses. An additional 50% Development Charge reduction is available to developments that include at least 3 of the Region's 5 Smart Growth Design Criteria into the proposed development. While the Region encourages local municipalities to establish a reduction program for local development charges in central urban areas and on brownfields, the reduction from Regional Development Charges is available even if the local municipality does not have a similar program.

## Property Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Tax Increment Funding Program

The purpose of this grant is to stimulate building and property rehabilitation or redevelopment. This includes designated central urban areas and brownfield sites. The Region will match the percentage of the tax increment generated by a rehabilitation or redevelopment project that is paid by the

local municipality in the form of a grant to the applicant. In the case of a brownfield redevelopment project, affordable housing project, or a project that includes at least 3 of the Region's 5 Smart Growth Design Criteria, the Regional share of the tax increment grant will equal at least 75% of the Regional property tax increment. Because the Regional tax share is larger than the local municipal tax share, the Region will contribute more to the tax increment based grant than the local municipality.

## Building and Façade Improvement Grant/Loan Program

The purpose of this program is to promote the structural improvement of buildings and/or the improvement of building façades. The Region will provide a matching grant or loan for façade improvements and/or building improvements on a cost shared basis with the local municipality to a maximum grant or loan from the Region of \$10,000 per property. This matching grant/loan from the Region can be used for façade improvements and/or building improvements and the entire amount of the grant/loan is available for either façade or building improvements.

The Region will also provide a matching grant or loan for side and/or rear façade improvements on a cost shared basis with the local municipality to a maximum grant or loan from the Region of \$10,000 per property.

The Region requires that all façade improvement projects taking advantage of the Regional Building and Façade Improvement Grant/Loan conform to either applicable local municipal urban design guidelines that are aligned with the Region's Model Urban Design Guidelines, or alternatively, the Region's Model Urban Design Guidelines.

## Residential Grant/Loan Program

The purpose of this program is to promote residential conversion, infill and intensification. The Region will provide a matching grant or loan on a cost shared basis with the local municipality to a maximum grant from the Region of \$7,500 per unit, or a matching loan from the Region of \$10,000 per unit, with a maximum of 20 units per property (grant or loan).



## Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program

The purpose of this program is to promote the construction of new residential units or renovation of existing residential units for affordable housing. The Region will provide matching grant or loan on a cost shared basis with the local municipality, to a maximum grant or loan from the Region of \$7,500 per affordable unit, with a maximum of 20 affordable units per property. The Affordable Housing Grant/Loan Program would be available in addition to the existing Residential Grant/Loan.

This program would be funded through a Regional Affordable Housing Reserve Fund. "Affordability" for rental and ownership units will be clearly defined for this program through the use of qualifying criteria and a mechanism will be developed to ensure the unit remains affordable over an extended period of time.

The requirement for a matching Local Municipality contribution will be reviewed as Local Municipalities may have difficulty matching the Regional grant portion. The details of this program, including the program definition of affordability, the specific mechanism to be utilized to ensure that units remain affordable, and program administration, will be developed in consultation with Niagara Regional Housing and the Local Municipalities.

## Heritage Restoration and Improvement Grant/Loan Program

The purpose of this program is to promote the restoration and improvement of buildings designated under Parts IV or V of the Ontario Heritage Act. The Region will provide a matching grant or loan on a cost shared basis with the local municipality to a maximum grant or loan from the Region of \$5,000 per residential property and \$15,000 per commercial or industrial property.

## Environmental Assessment Study Grant Program

The purpose of this program is to promote the undertaking of environmental site assessments so that better information is available with respect to the type of contamination and potential remediation costs on brownfield properties. The Region will provide a matching grant on a cost shared basis with the local municipality to a maximum grant from the Region of \$5,000 per property to promote the completion of Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, Remedial Action Plans and Risk Assessments.

## Public Domain Incentives Program

This program was introduced in 2007. The Region will provide a matching grant on a cost shared basis with the local municipality to a maximum grant from the Region of \$100,000 per project to support public realm improvements already identified in or in compliance with municipal planning documents including CIPs, Secondary Plans or Official Plans. This program is based on a competitive evaluation process whereby the project must meet the Region's eligibility criteria. These criteria include a "green component" constituting a minimum of 6% of overall project cost and compliance with local or Regional urban design guidelines. Preference will be given to projects that include heritage and/or public art components.

# Appendix B

## East Waterfront Secondary Plan



# EAST WATERFRONT SECONDARY PLAN

## 1 Purpose and Intent

The purpose and intent of this Secondary Plan is to amend the Official Plan land use designations as they apply to the East Waterfront area identified in Schedule A. The further intent is to clarify the goals for the East Waterfront and amend the City's Strategic Planning Policies to support the long-term vision for the area. This Secondary Plan also contains urban design policies for the area.

## 2 Goals for the East Waterfront

Land use decisions and municipal improvements in the East Waterfront shall support achievement of the following goals for the area:

- 2.1 Repair and renovate existing houses and other buildings
- 2.2 Protect, restore and re-use architecturally and historically significant buildings
- 2.3 Improve the quality of streetscapes in the neighbourhood
- 2.4 Reduce the environmental and visual impact of industrial uses
- 2.5 Attract new investment and development to vacant properties
- 2.6 Create new open spaces and recreational opportunities
- 2.7 Improve pedestrian and cycling connections to Nickel Beach and the lake generally
- 2.8 Establish more attractions at Nickel Beach
- 2.9 Protect and enhance the significant natural features of the lakefront

## 3 Strategic Planning Policies

The following Strategic Planning Policies have been established for the East Waterfront:

- 3.1 The City will, through a Community Improvement Plan and other initiatives, promote and facilitate improvements to private property in the East Waterfront.

- 3.2 The City will work, on its own and in partnership with other levels of government, agencies and landowners, to create over time a unique and regionally-significant network of open spaces and trails in the East Waterfront.

- 3.3 The City will continue to work with the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation to strengthen the prosperity of the marine industry on the east side of the Welland Canal, immediately west of the East Waterfront Secondary Plan area.

## 4 Land Use and Urban Design

This Secondary Plan amends the Land Use Schedule in the Official Plan by converting lands previously designated Industrial/Employment Area to Parks and Open Space or Urban Neighbourhood, as indicated in Schedule A.

Schedule B identifies more specific land use designations for the Urban Neighbourhood Area in the East Waterfront. The following policies shall apply in each of the areas in Schedule B:

### 4.1 Low-density Urban Neighbourhood

In Low-density Urban Neighbourhood Areas the following uses shall be permitted: detached, semi-detached and townhouse dwellings; wholly enclosed artist studios; and workshops and home-based businesses compatible with the neighbourhood. The minimum net density shall be 15 units per hectare.

### 4.2 Medium-density Urban Neighbourhood

In Medium-density Urban Neighbourhood Areas, townhouses and apartment buildings shall be permitted. The minimum net density shall be 35 units per hectare. New development shall address the adjacent streets and locate parking behind or at the side of buildings. The use of high quality building materials, such as brick, stone and glass and environmental sustainability features shall be encouraged. Applications for development in Medium-density Urban Neighbourhood areas shall include an assessment of potential impacts from existing industrial uses in the area that identifies any required mitigating measures and/or warning clauses.



#### 4.3 Mixed Use Areas

In Mixed Use Areas, neighbourhood-oriented, small-scale commercial uses, townhouses and apartment buildings of 2-5 storeys shall be permitted. Buildings shall have a minimum height of 2 storeys, and buildings that combine commercial uses on the ground floor and residential units on upper floors shall be encouraged. Buildings shall be required to address and frame the street, with parking located at the side or rear.

#### 4.4 Light Industrial Areas

In the Light Industrial Area on Welland Street, industrial uses wholly contained within buildings and which are generally compatible with the adjacent neighbourhood shall be permitted. The form and layout of new development should reinforce the character of the neighbourhood. Loading and servicing areas generally shall be located at the rear of buildings, and parking generally shall not be permitted in front of buildings. No outside storage shall be permitted.

#### 4.5 Parks and Open Space

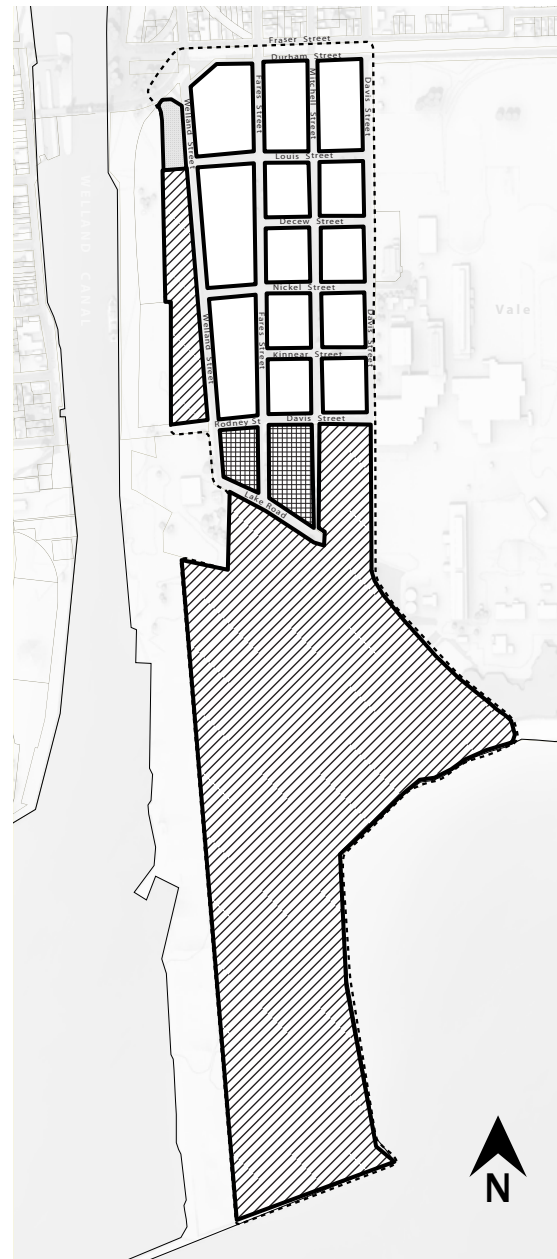
In areas designated for Parks and Open Space, community, cultural and ancillary small-scale commercial uses shall be permitted, in addition to parks and other public-accessible open spaces.

#### 4.6 Environmental Remediation

Development applications and the introduction of new uses in the East Waterfront, including parkland, shall have regard, if required, for the Port Colborne Community Based Risk Assessment. The introduction of new uses on former industrial lands shall be subject to further environmental studies that identify appropriate remediation strategies based on the specific uses proposed. A Record of Site Condition prepared to the satisfaction of the Ministry of the Environment shall be filed prior to sensitive uses being introduced to a former industrial property.

#### 4.7 Urban Design

Niagara Region's Model Urban Design Guidelines, or other municipal urban design guidelines generally consistent with the Region's guidelines, shall be applied to new development in the East Waterfront.



### Schedule A:

#### Secondary Plan Area and Land Use Conversions

-  Urban Neighbourhood
-  Industrial / Employment Area
-  Industrial / Employment Area to be designated Urban Neighbourhood
-  Industrial / Employment Area to be designated Parks and Open Space
-  Secondary Plan Area Boundary



## Schedule B:

### Land Use Plan

- Low-density Urban Neighbourhood
- Medium-density Urban Neighbourhood
- Mixed Use Areas
- Light Industrial Areas
- General Industrial Areas
- Parks and Open Space
- Secondary Plan Area Boundary
- Niagara Circle Route
- Bicycle Route

## 5 Public Realm

- 5.1 The City shall work to establish a network of streetscapes, parks and other open spaces in the East Waterfront that: encourages walking and cycling; accommodates a range of community amenities; enhances the environmental health of the area; and creates an attractive setting for development.
- 5.2 The Niagara Circle Route and Trans Canada Trail traverse the northern end of the East Waterfront. The City, in cooperation with Niagara Region, shall assist in maintaining and enhancing the physical qualities and character of the trail.
- 5.3 The City will prepare a streetscape and open space master plan for the East Waterfront based on the Community Improvement Plan for the area. The master plan shall include guidelines for the development and improvement of public open spaces, trails and streetscapes. It shall also include detailed plans for capital projects intended to improve the public realm.
- 5.4 The streetscape and open space master plan shall consider short-term and long-term options for extending the Welland Canal Trail to Nickel Beach and generally improving bicycle facilities in the area. The City shall work with the Region to ultimately extend the trail. In the interim, it is the City's intent to designate the bicycle route conceptually identified on Schedule B, or a portion thereof, as such and to include it within the Niagara Region Bicycle Network.
- 5.5 The East Waterfront, at the south end, includes a nesting site for Ring-billed Gulls, identified as an Important Bird Area (IBA). The streetscape and open space master plan shall consider the potential impacts of recreational and other human activities in the vicinity of the IBA and shall identify appropriate mitigation measures intended to protect the IBA.

## 6 Implementation

- 6.1 The primary tools for implementing this Secondary Plan shall be the Zoning By-law, Site Plan Control and a Community Improvement Plan for the East Waterfront.
- 6.2 The Community Improvement Plan for the East Waterfront shall include incentive programs intended to encourage physical improvements and/or development on private lands. It shall also establish a framework and directions for the preparation of a streetscape and open space master plan for the area, as generally described in Policies 5.3-5.5.
- 6.3 In implementing this plan and the Community Improvement Plan, the City shall continue to consult with residents, landowners and business owners in the East Waterfront.

