

A photograph of a sunset over the ocean, viewed from the deck of a boat. The sun is low on the horizon, partially obscured by clouds, creating a bright glow and reflecting on the water. The boat's deck is visible in the foreground, with a railing and some equipment.

CITY OF ST. CATHARINES

Sunset Beach Community Vision

JUNE 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 - INTRODUCTION	5
2.0 - BACKGROUND	6
2.1 - BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION	6
3.0 - EXISTING CONDITIONS	6
4.0 - COMMUNITY VISION	7
4.1 - RECREATIONAL FACILITIES	7
4.2 - BOAT LAUNCH	10
4.3 - WASHROOM	14
4.4 - SITE FURNISHINGS	15
4.5 - PARKING AND VEHICULAR ACCESS	15
4.6 - PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST ACCESS	19
4.7 - TRAILS	21
4.8 - NATURAL FEATURES	22
4.9 - DRAINAGE	26
4.10 - MAINTENANCE AND BY-LAW ENFORCEMENT	27
5.0 - IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND PHASING	29
6.0 - PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS	29
6.1 - OPEN HOUSE NO. 1, AUGUST 28, 2018	30
6.2 - OPEN HOUSE NO. 2, DECEMBER 12, 2018	33
6.3 - CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT	33
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX A: PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE NO. 1 AND ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSES	
APPENDIX B: MEETING MINUTES	
APPENDIX C: PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE NO. 2 MEETING COMMENTS	
APPENDIX D: OPEN HOUSE 2 PLANS	

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The City of St. Catharines wishes to acknowledge the citizens who attended the Public Open House meetings and responded to the survey questionnaire as well as the contributions of the following stakeholders, Ward representatives and City of St. Catharines staff:

STAKEHOLDERS

Niagara Sport and Social
Port Weller Neighbourhood Association
Friends of Malcolmson Eco-Park
Friends of Walker's Creek
Attendees of Public Meetings #1 and #2
St. Catharines MHSC (Multiple Hull Sailing Club)

CITY OF ST. CATHARINES WARD REPRESENTATIVES

Sandy Bellows, Councillor
Dawn Dodge, Councillor
Bill Phillips, Councillor

CITY OF ST. CATHARINES STAFF TEAM

Christine Adams, Manager, Engineering and Construction, Transportation and Environmental Services
John Bellehumeur, Manager of Parks, Cemeteries, Forestry and Horticulture, PRCS
Steve Bittner, Transportation Technologist, Transportation and Environmental Services
Jessica Button, Project Manager
Phil Cristi, Director, Parks, Recreation and Culture Services
Dan Dillon, P. Eng., Director of Transportation and Environmental Services
Stuart Green, Landscape Architect, Parks, Recreation and Culture Services
Eric Lamothe, Acting Manager, Business Planning and Strategic Services, Parks, Recreation and Culture Services
Peter Leyster, Transportation Technologist, Transportation and Environmental Services
Kyra Nicholson, Economic Development and Tourism Services
David Oakes, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

CITY OF ST. CATHARINES STAFF TEAM CONTINUED...

Michael Otter, P. Eng., Design and Construction Engineer, Transportation and Environmental Services

Judy Pihach, Manager of Planning and Building Services

Jim Somerville, Fire Prevention Officer, Fire Services

Amy Tomaino, Manager, Business Planning and Strategic Services

CONSULTANT TEAM

Marianne Mokrycke, Principal, OMC Landscape Architecture

Patty Lynes, Principal, Gradina Design



OMC Landscape Architecture
270 Sherman Ave. N, Suite 315-MILL
www.omcla.ca | 905.681.7604

1.0 - INTRODUCTION

The Sunset Beach Community Vision provides guidance for the long-term development of this increasingly popular recreation area. The Vision supports the City's Parks Policy Plan which places high priority on completing gaps in the waterfront trail, increasing public access to the waterfront trail, and improving waterfront parks.



The Vision is in keeping with the City of St. Catharines Strategic Plan: 2015-2025 which identifies a vision for the future of St. Catharines as the most dynamic, sustainable, and livable city in North America.

The scope of the study area extends from the north limit of the beach where the north parking area meets Region of Niagara lands, to Lombardy Avenue and Arthur Street, and Club LaSalle lands to the south. Parking and traffic issues within the Port Weller neighbourhood were not in the scope of this study and are being addressed separately by City staff.

Sunset Beach is a waterfront park on Lake Ontario and the Waterfront Trail, in close proximity to the Welland Canal Parkway Trail, Walker's Creek Trail and Malcolmson Eco-Park. Nearly seven hectares in size, the park offers a sandy beach, mature trees primarily in picnic areas, a playground, two beach volleyball nets, a public boat launch, a washroom and parking areas.

Many park facilities are approaching the end of their service life and are in need of replacement or will be in need of repair in future. Improvements to barrier-free accessibility are required.

Future improvements to the park will require investment on the part of the City of St. Catharines. Capital investment required for Sunset Beach will not be immediately available, therefore park improvements will be phased.

Sunset Beach is subject to various competing requirements, as is typical in park space in many communities. It is actively used by neighbourhood residents, St. Catharines residents and increasingly by visitors from outside of the area.

The beach and park site are highly valued by the community. The intent of this Vision document is to identify key features that require improvement; while respecting the site's character and preserving its sense of place.

2.0 - BACKGROUND

The City of St. Catharines engaged OMC Landscape Architecture to assist with analysis of the existing site conditions at the park, and the creation of a Sunset Beach Community Vision based on the need to bring various park facilities to current standards. Public consultation was an integral part of the process in the development of the Vision.

2.1 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTATION

- 2016 St. Catharines Strategic Plan
- The Garden City Plan-The City of St. Catharines Official Plan
- Recreation Facility and Programming Master Plan
- Parks Policy Plan
- AODA Standards (City and Provincial)
- City of St. Catharines 2016-2020 Accessibility Plan

3.0 - EXISTING CONDITIONS

Sunset Beach is a city-wide park located in the Port Weller Neighbourhood and is owned by the City of St. Catharines. Until 2015 it was known as Municipal Beach. Approximately 7.0 ha in size, the beach and park areas are located at 1 Lombardy Avenue. Nearby recreational facilities include the Malcolmson Eco-Park, the Welland Canal Parkway Trail, the Waterfront Trail and the Walker's Creek Trail.

Port Weller Community Centre and Bogart Park are located a few blocks south of the beach.

The Seaway Lands are located north of the beach, and the Port Weller Wastewater Treatment plant immediately to the east.

Beach amenities include parking facilities, a washroom building, two beach volleyball courts, play equipment area, picnic area and public boat launch.

Citizens participating in the Public Open Houses and stakeholder meetings provided valuable information with respect to their experiences concerning the history, park activities, usage, facilities, and safety/maintenance issues at the site.

4.0 - COMMUNITY VISION

The final Sunset Beach Community Vision was developed based on comments from attendees at the Public Open Houses, the results of the online feedback survey, handwritten and emailed comments from members of the public, comments from external stakeholder groups, and contributions by City staff.

The intent of the Sunset Beach Community Vision is to improve existing facilities and provide a long-term framework for improvements.

This principle was met with support by most participants as indicated by survey results, comment sheets and comments recorded on presentation boards.

During the consultation process, it became evident that participants considered the park to be not only an important factor with respect to their personal health and wellness, but also to the outdoor environment of their City. Activities such as dog walking, running and walking for exercise, cycling, opportunities to walk near a natural area, and spaces for unstructured play were among the desired activities identified. There were numerous favourable comments regarding new naturalized areas, additional tree planting and preservation of existing green infrastructure.

In addition, detailed comments and suggestions for improvements to the boat launch area were received from members of the boating community.

The final Sunset Beach Community Vision plan describes a balance between programmed activities, facilities that serve the larger community, and needs of residents who either live nearby or drive to the park throughout all seasons of the year.

4.1 RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

PLAYGROUND AND PICNIC AREAS

The existing playground is located in an open lawn area, adjacent to the trail but removed from the beach and the washroom building. The play equipment was installed in approximately 1998 and is in need of replacement.

The play area does not meet current barrier-free accessibility standards for new construction.



Existing play area



Relationship to existing trail

Picnic tables are situated throughout the open grassed areas near the south end of the beach. There are no tables immediately adjacent to an accessible pathway. Park users were observed using propane cooking devices, and evidence of charcoal barbecue use was observed due to the presence of coals dumped at the base of trees.



Picnic areas in the park benefit from mature tree cover



Swimming and sunbathing were identified as popular activities.

During the consultation period some residents expressed the need for improvements to maintenance and enforcement of city by-laws with respect to off-leash dogs, bonfires on the beach, and parking. Others spoke of water quality particularly in swimming areas and expressed the desire for a Blue Flag classification.

Based on written comments received, park and beach users appeared to be generally satisfied with maintenance.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

4.1.1 - PLAYGROUND

The redevelopment of Sunset Beach will provide an opportunity create a play environment that is complex, interesting, and integrated with the surrounding landscape. Manufactured play equipment can contribute greatly to a play space by providing sensory variety through colour and texture. Conversely, many play spaces incorporate natural materials and there are also benefits associated with this practice.

- Include both natural and man-made materials, provision of shade that includes both tree planting and a shade structure, seating for caregivers, and a vegetative buffer which separates the play area from the park trail system.
- Locate the play area closer to the beach and to washrooms.
- Include separate play spaces for children under the age of five, and older children aged five to twelve years of age (current practice).
- Play features to be in conformance with CSA Z614-14, Annex H latest edition (required/current practice).
- Connect the play areas to the main pathway or trail system using a paved walkway (accessibility).
- Provide a buffer between the main trail used by cyclists and the play area.
- Provide seating and amenity space for adult caregivers (current practice).
- Provide good sight lines for easy supervision of children.
- Accessible surface, barrier required to prevent sand from the accessible surface.

4.1.2 - PICNIC AREAS

- Provide twenty percent of the picnic tables in the picnic area with wheelchair access at one end.
- Accessible tables to be installed on a paved surface with a paved connection to the adjacent trail or walkway.
- In the interest of maintaining green space to the greatest extent possible, the remaining picnic tables may be situated throughout the lawn areas.
- Provide fixed barbecues.
- Locate picnic tables in proximity to beach, playground and washroom facilities.

4.1.3 - BEACH VOLLEYBALL

There are two existing beach volleyball courts with permanent posts at the south end of the beach. They are intended to remain.



Permanent posts to remain.

4.2 - BOAT LAUNCH

The existing boat launch was constructed in the late 1980's. It is suitable for small motorized boats such as jet skis, as well as small non-motorized watercraft. The boat launch is in poor condition with heaving, broken sections of concrete. It is the only public (non-paid) boat launch in the City of St. Catharines. The boat launch and public swimming beach are a somewhat unique situation since boat launches are generally separated from beach areas for safety reasons. This did not appear to be a problem prior to approximately 2015 when the beach was cleaned up and became much more popular.

Trucks with trailers back into boat launch and also use the rocky beach foreshore area adjacent to the boat launch on the north side.

North Side of Boat Launch: This area is used as parking by trucks with trailers which can remain in this area up to an entire day.

Non-motorized boats (i.e. catamarans, sailboats), stage their boats in the parking lot or immediately off-shore. Non-motorized boats require beach access for staging.



Boat Launch showing detail of break wall

Vehicular circulation and parking around the boat launch are poorly delineated with indistinct separation between car parking and driving lanes. There are no designated truck/trailer parking stalls, and double parking and parking at the perimeter can occur on very busy summer days. The unorganized parking can preclude emergency vehicle access at such times.



Continued erosion of the shoreline will be prevented by eliminating vehicles from this area

The area to the north east of the boat launch is showing signs of erosion. City of St. Catharines Engineering Staff have investigated the area and have indicated that there are two possible remedies:

1. Allow the shoreline to continue to erode or re-grade the shore to a natural beach slope and eliminate the erosion of the fill material. The width of the parking area would therefore be reduced by 3.0m from the top of the beach slope.
2. Construct an armourstone retaining wall along the interface between the beach and the backshore where erosion is occurring.



View of existing boat launch

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR BOAT LAUNCH

There was general agreement among the boating community participants that the boat launch should remain in its present location, with the following improvements:

- Re-construct boat launch in its present location.
- Increase the width of the boat launch by 1.5m in order to accommodate two vehicles and trailers.
- Provide colour contrast at perimeter of dock to optimize visibility.
- Provide a concrete dock on the south side of the boat launch.
- Improve break wall which provides protection for the boat launch, particularly during rough weather.
- Provide painted markings at boat launch approach to accommodate two lanes of vehicles. This would necessitate paving the approach.
- Provide a beach area for boat users.

- Provide an access path for boaters accessing the sand beach (kayaks, canoes, catamarans) through the proposed re-vegetation area separating the sand beach from the boat launch area.
- Maintain the staging area at the east side of the boat launch.
- Separate swimmers from watercraft.
- Arrange for the buoys and lines for the swimming area to be at an approximately 30-degree angle from the shore, because weather conditions can prevent boats from returning to shore at a 90-degree angle.
- Discontinue practice of truck and trailer parking at edge of water.

The above proposed improvements will involve initial capital investment on the part of the City of St. Catharines for construction work and education of users of the boat launch area. Ongoing operational investment will be required for enforcement of regulations.



Separate swimmers from watercraft

4.3 - WASHROOM

The existing washroom building is in poor condition and was identified by the public as a priority for replacement. It received the highest scoring (52) of facilities in need of improvement at the first Open House. Refer to Figure on page 32 of this document. The washroom is located along the east property boundary adjacent to the Waste Water Treatment plant and within the parking area. Park users must cross through a gravel driveway and parking area in order to access the washroom which is neither barrier-free nor accessible. The foot wash station was out of order during the summer of 2018. Since it is the only building in the park, the exterior wall is also used for public notices.



Existing washroom near east property boundary

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR WASHROOM

- Locate a combined washroom/change room/maintenance building centrally within the park in proximity to barrier-free parking stalls.
- Include a foot wash station and change rooms.
- Washroom to be barrier-free, to a similar size and facilities as recently constructed at West Park. This washroom will require a larger changing area.
- The new washroom will be connected with accessible pathways therefore, park users will no longer be required to traverse the parking lot to access the washroom. A soft landscaped area adjacent to the washroom provides flexibility for future expansion.
- The new washroom will be centrally located for all park users.

4.4 - SITE FURNISHINGS

In addition to picnic tables, existing benches have been strategically placed to take advantage of views toward the lake. There are no benches near the beach or boat ramp. Logs placed on the beach are popular with park users (as seats). There are currently no bicycle racks. It was identified by community participants that additional litter containers would be desirable.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR SITE FURNISHINGS

- Provide seating throughout the park and beach areas using a selection of benches, as well as natural log seats and boulders.
- Ensure that 20% of bench seating is accessible with connections from an adjacent pedestrian pathway.
- Install 20% of benches on hard surfaces, with additional surfacing which will accommodate mobility devices such as walkers, wheelchairs, and strollers.
- Provide bicycle racks.
- Provide additional litter containers. Locate litter containers adjacent to trails or paved areas to minimize impact of maintenance vehicles on soft landscaped areas.

4.5 - PARKING AND VEHICULAR ACCESS

Parking issues both within the park and in the adjacent neighbourhood were heavily commented upon by community members during the public commenting periods.

The existing parking lot is primarily gravel. A remnant ball hockey court provides a partial asphalt surface within the parking area. The main parking area closest to Lombardy Avenue is shaped irregularly due to existing site conditions. Parking stalls are unpainted (granular), therefore the total number of parking stalls is currently undefined.

On busy weekends park and beach users were observed to be parking on grassed areas under trees within the park, and double parking in the north parking area near the boat launch. Residents living in proximity to the park have commented on the presence of vehicles in the road allowances of the neighbourhood as a result of overflow parking from Sunset Beach.

There are no designated barrier-free parking spaces at the site.

There is no designated route for emergency vehicles. The fire department requires a fire access route at this site.

4.5.1 - LOMBARDY/BOGART STREET ENTRANCE AND FIRE ACCESS ROUTE

The asphalt driveway leading into the park and beach area is approximately 6.0 m in width. In certain locations existing mature trees are located immediately adjacent to the driveway. This vehicular entrance is frequently shared by pedestrians and cyclists.



Driveway used as drop-off area



When the park and beach are heavily attended, parking occurs along the entrance driveway hampering two-way traffic as well as emergency vehicle access

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR LOMBARDY/BOGART STREET ENTRANCE AND FIRE ACCESS ROUTE

- Improve entrance intersection layout at street to accommodate fire truck turning radii of 12.0 m.
- Widen entrance driveway width to 7.5m by extending pavement on east side.
- Minimize tree damage and removals where possible.
- Re-plant trees to replace any that are removed to accommodate lane widening.
- Replace post and chain barrier.
- Provide a separate pedestrian entrance to avoid pedestrian and vehicular conflicts.

4.5.2 - NORTH PARKING AREA AND FIRE ACCESS ROUTE

Parking issues at the north parking area included reports of conflict between park users with respect to blocking driving lanes, double parking, parking in front of boat ramp and no parking available for users of the boat ramp.



Parking impedes access to the boat ramp



Existing staging area at east side to be retained

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR NORTH PARKING AREA AND FIRE ACCESS ROUTE

- Paving and line painting to delineate parking spaces, fire access route, and staging areas. In order for line painting to occur, paving of the parking area would be required.
- Regulatory signage.
- Create fire access route with loop to ensure continuous forward motion by fire service personnel.
- Provide a barrier-free parking space.
- At the time of detailed design, ensure that parking stalls and driving aisles are sized and geometrically suitable for vehicles hauling trailers.

4.5.3 - MAIN PARKING AREA

When the park and beach are busy, parking has been described as haphazard due to high demand and the absence of painted markings. The triangular shape of the parking area contributes to the situation.



During the summer months, when parking is in demand, both the parking area and driveways are compromised.



Existing condition at back of parking area.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR MAIN PARKING AREA

- Paved, barrier-free parking stalls are proposed in a central location, near the new washroom building, and to ramp and/or mobi-mat connections to the beach area.
- A future option of paved parking with line painting is proposed, toward a parking layout which is organized and maximized.
- Parking will remain as gravel with the exception of barrier-free spaces.
- Existing pavement at the entrance driveway will remain until the vehicular entrance and driveway are widened. At that time investigation to determine the extent of re-paving or patching will be required.
- An option for expansion of the parking area was presented in Option B at Open House No. 2. While many participants were in agreement with the parking expansion, others disagreed that this option would result in the loss of green space and require tree removal. In the final plan, this is indicated as a future option.
- Considerations at the time of detailed design: The City may wish to consider permeable pavement in parking areas with the exception of the barrier-free parking stalls.
- A paved pedestrian connection is proposed along the length of the parking spaces closest to the beach.

4.6 - PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLIST ACCESS

Generally, the park lacks a sense of arrival in the form of clearly defined park entrances and signage. Improved aesthetics and function are proposed at all park entrances. Trails and pathways are for the most part granular and not to standard widths. Trails are narrow and do not easily accommodate two-way or multi-use. The waterfront trail provides an important means of access to the park. However, the trail enters the park in three locations, which are neither well defined nor accessible.

The following descriptions and improvements are proposed with intent to re-direct non-vehicular traffic from the main vehicular entrance and to promote pedestrian and cycling connections.

4.6.1 - ARTHUR STREET ENTRANCE

The waterfront trail entrance to the park (at the west end) is located at the terminus to Arthur Street.

At this location, the trail into the park and beach area is accessed from a gap immediately south of the guard rail that marks the end of the roadway.

An existing section of concrete sidewalk leads to an opening in the guard rail beyond which is a steep (greater than 5%), paved section of trail with raised speed bumps. Within the park and beach property is a short spur section of the Waterfront Trail that leads to the Club LaSalle Lands to the west.



Trail at Arthur Street



Arthur Street trail entrance

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR ARTHUR STREET ENTRANCE

- Remove guard rail and replace with natural stone boulders.
- Plant boulder area with native grasses or ground covers suitable for site conditions.
- Provide site identification: "Sunset Beach, Arthur Street Entrance".

4.6.2 - LOMBARDY/BOGART STREET ENTRANCE

The vehicular entrance at this location is frequently accessed by cyclists and pedestrians, and concerns have been expressed with respect to the safety and functionality.



Shared vehicular/pedestrian/cycling entrance

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR LOMBARDY/BOGART STREET ENTRANCE

- A new pedestrian entrance is proposed adjacent to the vehicular entrance, situated roughly parallel to the roadway, toward the central washroom area of the site.
- Continue design vocabulary of natural rocks and native plants to frame entrance.
- Provide site identification "Sunset Beach".

4.6.3 - LOMBARDY AVENUE, EAST ENTRANCE

The waterfront trail entrance to the park (east end) is accessed from Lombardy Avenue, through a gap in the chain link fence which runs along the Lombardy Avenue frontage. The chain link fence is concealed with vines in some locations.

The gravel section of trail at the Lombardy Avenue entrance drops steeply within the park (exceeds 5% gradient) and crosses the existing drainage swale. The gravel path at this location does not meet the current standards of accessibility as described in the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Niagara Region's 'Accessibility Plan 2012-2017'.

The path then continues through the park, crossing the main drive, continuing west through the picnic and playground areas.

Pedestrians exiting the park from this location continue on-road past the entrance to the Waste Water Treatment Plant and are then able to enter the trail to Malcolmson Eco-Park.



View of entrance from Lombardy Street



Trail connection toward Malcomson Eco-Park

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR LOMBARDY AVENUE, EAST ENTRANCE

- Improve trail gradients at this entrance for accessibility in accordance with AODA Standards (municipal and provincial).
- Continue design vocabulary of natural rocks and native grasses to replace the chain link fence opening at existing entrance.
- Chain link fencing along the street frontage may be improved by situating boulders as a barrier and removing chain link fence.

4.7 - TRAILS

The Waterfront trail links Sunset Beach Park with Malcomson Eco-Park to the east and continues west on and off road to the west including waterfront sections.

Enhancement of pedestrian and trail infrastructure is an important mandate for the City of St. Catharines and has been identified in the 2016 St. Catharines Strategic Plan, The Recreation Facility and Programming Master Plan and the City of St. Catharines 2016-2020 Accessibility Plan.



Existing granular trail



Trail Crossing at driveway



Trail through park area



Trail near Arthur Street is steep at this location

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR TRAILS

- Pave portions of the trails to ensure continuous access from park entrances to washroom area and beach.
- Widen all trails where possible to a minimum of 2.0m and a maximum longitudinal slope of 1:20.
- Conduct a tree inventory to determine trail improvements or extensions that will minimize damage to existing trees.
- Provide rest stops at intervals of 30 to 50 metres.

4.8 - NATURAL FEATURES

4.8.1 - TREES AND VEGETATION

The predominant tree species in the park is poplar. Other species include silver maple and oak. In addition to trees at the beach, the grassed picnic areas south and southeast of the beach benefit from the canopies of mature deciduous trees.



In 2017, blocks were added to protect this green space



Vehicular parking compacts root zones of trees



Existing vegetation at beach area

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR TREES AND VEGETATION

- Tree planting throughout in park areas, to increase tree canopy in keeping with City of St. Catharines Urban Forestry Management Plan.
- Provide predominantly hardwood species in park and picnic areas that are suitable for growing conditions.
- Provide understory vegetation and tree planting in areas between the beach and the parking lot to increase shade in beach area.
- Review planting area interface with city maintenance personnel at the time of detailed design to ensure that beach grooming activities are not compromised.
- Provide species within the beach zone suitable for that environment.
- Provide buffer planting between parking area and Waste Water Treatment plant where space permits.
- Design trail alignment and grading based on least impact to the existing trees. Provide one crossing at the existing swale.
- Undertake a Tree Inventory and Management Plan prior to commencement of detailed design in order to reduce impacts to trees as a result of new construction.

4.8.2 - BEACH AND SAND MITIGATION

The Beach is approximately 365m in length and varies from roughly 50 to 90m in width. Public comments have indicated that the beach is generally considered clean and well maintained. A number of participants indicated that some beach users were responsible for most maintenance issues.



View of groomed beach

The lake is very shallow, and swimmers venture a distance off shore. Boating activity and swimmers are in conflict off shore but also closer to the beach, where motorized boats enter areas close to shore among the swimmers.

There is no differentiation along the beach between swimming areas and areas for boats which has created safety concerns. In advance of the completion of this Vision, staff are investigating buoy markers and lines to separate swimming and boating areas.

Sand migration has been identified by staff as an important issue; particularly as it relates to loss of sand and accompanying maintenance of the beach. The most severe area of sand migration has been identified northeast of the beach, generally in the vicinity of the entrance to the north parking area at the boat launch.



Sand migration near north parking lot



Mobi-mats support wheelchairs in sand areas



Natural shade from existing trees is in demand during warmer summer months

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR BEACH AND SAND MITIGATION

- Retain the services of a Shoreline Engineer to conduct a detailed study of the dynamics of this site.
- In principle, the Vision includes a large vegetated raised planting area in the area of sand migration. Plant materials would include trees for additional shade, as well as native grasses and groundcovers suitable for the growing environment.
- Provide mobi-mats for accessible access to beach area.
- Provide shade in the form of tree planting at a seating area in the mobi-mat area.
- Provide ramp access to the beach in accordance with City of St. Catharines accessibility standards.
- Provide permanent decorative fencing for sand control (to be confirmed at the time of detailed design).

4.8.3 - SOUTH END

An existing pathway extends in front of the adjacent properties at the western end of the beach. This pathway is at a higher elevation than the beach with a row of armourstone along the interface. Wind transports sand from the beach onto the pathway. The beach is narrow at this location and it is possible that waves run up the beach and overtop the pathway during high level lake storms. In the past, engineering recommendations have indicated consideration of a dune development project that would minimize sand losses from the beach due to wind transport.



View of pathway near Club Lasalle

4.9 - DRAINAGE

An existing drainage swale runs from east to west between the main parking lot and Lombardy Avenue, bisecting the park/picnic areas.

The swale appears to discharge close to the back of the beach at the south end. Park users have advised that sand in this area is often damp or wet and is therefore not well used.



Existing swale



Picnic tables located in treed park area

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR DRAINAGE

- Regrade the swale to ensure continuous positive drainage.
- Adjust culverts as required.
- Provide pedestrian bridges where necessary.
- Reduce beach grooming operations in wet area and allow moisture loving plants to colonize.

4.10 - MAINTENANCE AND BY-LAW ENFORCEMENT

4.10.1 - MAINTENANCE ISSUES

Off-leash dog walking was identified as a health and safety issue at Sunset Beach. Other factors included the lack of litter disposal areas, the lack of charcoal disposal areas, and broken glass, litter and live coals left on the beach.



Canada Day Weekend 2018. Additional waste containers have been suggested as an improvement.



Charcoal waste at the base of a tree

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO ADDRESS MAINTENANCE ISSUES

- Signage to delineate swimming areas and restrict dogs from the swimming area.
- Signage to delineate swimming and boating areas.
- Signage indicating that dogs must be leashed in park areas.



Example of wayfinding/signage

4.10.2 - WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE

Sunset Beach is in proximity to the Waterfront Trail and Malcolmson Eco-Park. It was requested by participants that mapping and signage identifying trail connections and nearby recreational facilities be clearly represented in the form of trail maps and signage at strategic locations in the park. Other requests included interpretive signage that could identify natural features and/or historical aspects of Sunset Beach.



Signage throughout park to be strategically located



Existing signage kiosk to be replaced

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS FOR WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE

A - Regulatory Signage	B - Wayfinding & Interpretive Signage	C - Information Signage
Provide regulatory signage throughout the park	Provide trail mapping at park entrances	Replace existing signage kiosk
Parking regulations, including signage at the fire access route	Provide interpretive signage describing environmental features of Sunset Beach.	
Signage regarding use of the boat launch for various types of watercraft.	Provide interpretive signage describing historical features of Sunset Beach.	
City of St. Catharines park signage		
Dog walking regulations		
Picnic area regulations		

5.0 - IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND PHASING

The total capital cost for the park is approximately 6.4 million as estimated using 2018 data. It is expected that the phasing will take place over a period of approximately five years.

Phasing has been organized with respect to initial work that can be readily accomplished in the short term, in consideration of priority of need, and logical sequence of construction. Public comments have overwhelmingly identified the washroom as a high priority. Safety and maintenance were also identified as priorities (Appendix D).

Implementation of the Sunset Beach Community Vision is dependent on the ability of the City of St. Catharines to fund the project, as well as the ability to access funding from other levels of government or other agencies.

The Sunset Beach Community Vision organizes thirteen items into three phases of redevelopment for Sunset Beach. A park redevelopment of this magnitude will not be possible for the City of St. Catharines to implement in one phase.

Budgetary cost estimates do not include municipal project administration costs.

6.0 - PUBLIC CONSULTATION PROCESS

Consultation played a key role in generating ideas from the outset, and in generating community support for the project.

Public consultation and input were achieved through stakeholder meetings, two (2) Public Open Houses and an online survey posted on the City's website. Presentation panels of the park options were displayed at City Hall along with comments sheets.

The following is a list of consultation meetings that took place during the Sunset Beach Community Vision process:

- Stakeholder Meeting No. 1, July 12, 2018
- Stakeholder Meeting No. 2, October 16, 2018
- Stakeholder Meeting No. 3, January 10, 2019
- Public Open House No. 1, August 28, 2018
- Public Open House No. 2, December 12, 2018

6.1 - OPEN HOUSE NO. 1 - AUGUST 28, 2018

The first Public Open House on August 28, 2018 was attended by approximately 80 participants.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING:

Public Open House #1 included a brief introduction to the project background, existing site conditions, and impressions on the part of the consultants with respect to the site. Participants were then invited to review display panels which had been prepared with questions intended to gain an understanding of the community's thoughts on the present and future of the park and beach. Each participant was given three blue and three red adhesive dots so that they could vote on:

- The three activities undertaken the most when visiting Sunset Beach.
- The three main areas of improvement to facilities at Sunset Beach.

Panels were displayed at City Hall following the meeting. Comment sheets were provided both at the meeting and during the commenting period which ended on September 28th. Comments were posted on the City's website.

The consulting team prepared a survey requesting feedback on user preferences for existing and proposed facilities. The City posted the online survey on its website. A total of 309 survey responses were received. An additional 47 handwritten questionnaires were completed by attendees of Public Open House No. 1, bringing the total number of completed surveys to 356.

Refer to Appendix A for the public questionnaire summary, and written input and well as the program summary. Based on public input at the meeting and survey responses, two design options were developed.

RESULTS / COMMENTS OF ACTIVITIES DONE MOST AT SUNSET BEACH

ACTIVITY	COUNTS BASED ON P.I.C. #1 - AUGUST 28, 2018	OTHER / COMMENTS
SUNBATHING	24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SAILING (NO MOTOR) (4 PEOPLE) - BRING TOURISTS - CREATE NEW ENTRANCE & PARKING AREA OFF GOVERNMENT ROAD BEHIND WASTE TREATMENT PLANT (REGIONAL PROPERTY) - MARK PATH / TRAIL FOR WINTER WALKING - KAYAKING AND PADDLE BOARDING - JET SKIS TO JONES BEACH
SWIMMING	34	
BOATING	21	
JET SKIING	41	
PLAYGROUND	13	
PICNIC AREA	15	
TRAILS: WALKING	44	
TRAILS: CYCLING	17	
RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING (PRE-REGISTERED CLASSES OR LEAGUE; VOLLEYBALL ETC.)	1	
UN-PROGRAMMED BEACH GAMES (NO REGISTRATION; VOLLEYBALL, FRISBEE, ETC)	1	
WINDSURFING	3	

SUNSET BEACH

SUNSET BEACH COMMUNITY VISION

PARTICIPATION PANELS - ACTIVITIES - COMMENTS



 innovative,
outside thinking.
 270 Sherman Avenue North, Suite 215-MLL, Hamilton, ON L8L 6N4
 Telephone: 905.681.7604 Fax: 905.681.2944 www.omic.ca
 LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING RESOURCE ANALYSIS



RESULTS / COMMENTS ON FACILITIES THAT NEED MOST IMPROVEMENT AT SUNSET BEACH

FACILITY	COUNTS BASED ON P.I.C. #1 - AUGUST 28, 2018	OTHER / COMMENTS
PICNIC AREA	5	- IMPORTANT TO KEEP THE BEACH AS A BEACH & NOT ANOTHER PORT DALHOUSIE
PLAYGROUND	5	- MORE SWINGS ON PLAYGROUND
TRAILS	4	- COVER UP DITCH GOING THROUGH PARK BETWEEN WALKING PATH AND PICNIC AREA (USE DRAIN PIPE AND LEVEL GROUND)
PROVISION OF SHADE	13	- STANDING WATER IS GROSS AND ATTRACTS INSECTS
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS	6	- SIGNAGE - END OF ARTHUR ST. BEACH ACCESS PEDESTRIAN ONLY. (ADD SIGN "BEACH THIS WAY")
ACCESSIBLE PATHWAYS	8	- SIGNAGE "NO TENTING/ CAMPING/ PARKING" ALSO AT WEST END ARTHUR ST. ENTRANCE OR / AND ENFORCE THESE BYLAWS - RESIDENTS SHOULD NOT HAVE TO BE POLICE
BOAT LAUNCH	25	- NEED FOR BETTER SIGNS
JET SKI AREA	26	- THERE ARE NO SIDEWALKS - WATCH FOR PEDESTRIANS CYCLING, DOG-WALKING FROM SPEEDING
WASHROOMS	52	- GARBAGE & RECYCLING IS A BIG ISSUE
PARKING AREAS	35	- CHANGE ROOMS / SHOWERS NEEDED
SEATING	7	- DOG PARK
WASTE AND RECYCLING AREAS	13	- DOGS OFF LEASH (DESIGNATED AREAS WOULD KEEP SAND CLEAN FOR CHILDREN PLAY)
WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE	4	- FIREWORK DISPLAYS WITHOUT SAFETY OF BYSTANDERS CONSIDERED EG. JULY 1ST
NATURALIZED AREAS (NATIVE TREES, SHRUBS, GRASSES)	14	- OVERALL UPKEEP; LIGHTING; PORTS
		- SUMMER LIFEGUARDS
		- ALTERNATE ENTRANCE & PARKING AT OTHER END
		- DESIGNATED AREA FOR AUTHORIZED VENDORS TO SELL OR RENT OUT SUPPLIES FOR USE AT THE BEACH
		- INSTEAD OF MAKING VOLLEYBALL POLES PERMANENTLY SINK INTO THE GROUND, THE USE OF REMOVABLE POLES COULD ACCOMMODATE MORE ACTIVITIES
		- PERMANENT BBQ PITS
		- NEED OPEN BEACH NEAR BOAT RAMP FOR SAFETY HOISTING SALES & COMPLETE RIGGING OF SAILBOATS TAKES 15 MINS ALSO FOR DE-RIGGING AT END OF DAY

SUNSET BEACH

SUNSET BEACH COMMUNITY VISION

PARTICIPATION PANELS - FACILITIES - COMMENTS


OMC LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
 innovative, outside thinking.
 270 Sherman Avenue North, Suite 215-MLL, Hamilton, ON L8L 0H4
 Telephone: 905.681.7604 Fax: 905.681.2944 www.omcb.ca



6.2 - OPEN HOUSE NO. 2 - DECEMBER 12, 2018

PUBLIC INPUT

The second Public Open House held on December 12, 2018 was attended by approximately 65 members of the community.

ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING:

Public Open House #2 included a brief presentation on the project background, opportunities and constraints, and featured two park options. The presentation was followed by questions and general discussion. Information presented at the meeting was posted on the City's website.

Following Open House #2, 12 comments sheets were handed in. City staff also received 19 emailed comments. On December 20, 2018, an online survey was posted on the City's website where residents provided feedback about the proposed conceptual plans. The survey closed on Friday, January 11, 2019. A total of 41 online survey responses were received.

6.3 - CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

Sunset Beach has many positive features that are serving the community well, as well as features that require improvement.

The following elements are common to both Concepts:

- Improvements to park entrances, both aesthetically and functionally.
- Improvements to trail connections to facilities external to the site, as well as connecting trails within the site that are fully accessible.
- Improvements to main driveway for fire access route, including widening of the entrance at Lombardy Avenue to accommodate the turning radius of fire trucks.

The following option boards were presented, and in similar manner to the first Open House, participants were asked to place a dot on the Option which they preferred:

- Washroom
- Playground Area
- Sun Shelters
- North Parking and Boat Ramp
- Main Parking Area Improvements
- Paid Parking at boat launch, entire site, and unpaid parking (entire site)

Refer to Appendix D for Open House #2 Option Boards.

The Community Vision Plan which appears on the following page, is a combination of features that were generally found to be most favourable by residents and staff.

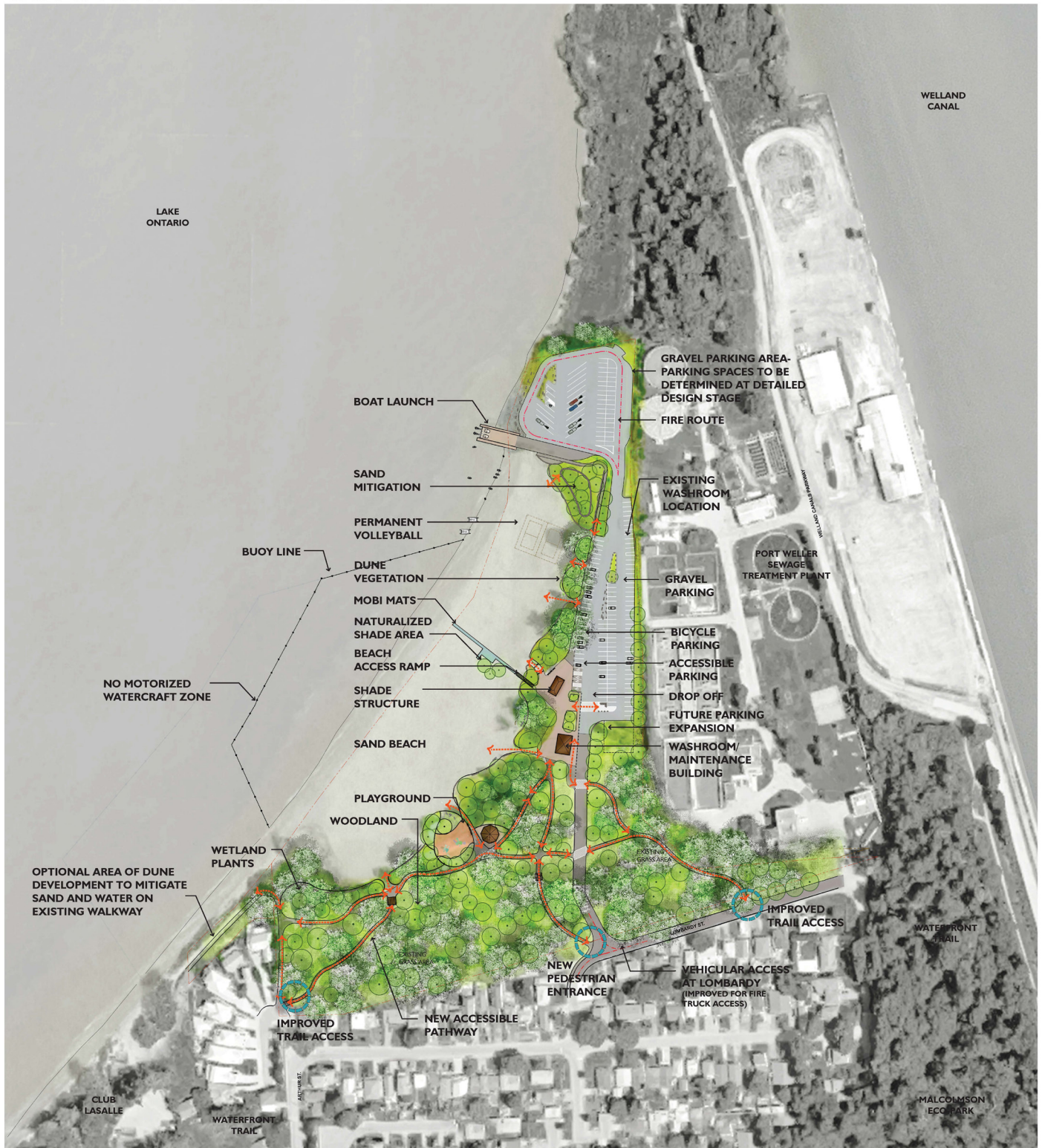
The vision was based on the needs and function of the whole community; toward balancing diverse requirements with the physical characteristics of the site.




The vision established guiding principles toward the next step, which is a Functional Plan which would generally include the following detailed investigations:

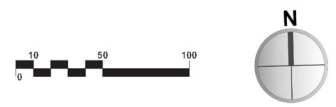
- Shoreline study to examine sand migration and future boat launch
- Boat launch design
- Approvals and permitting from regulatory bodies
- Preparation of a topographic survey, preliminary grading plan, and tree inventory and management plan
- Engineering studies associated with site utilities
- Other studies required

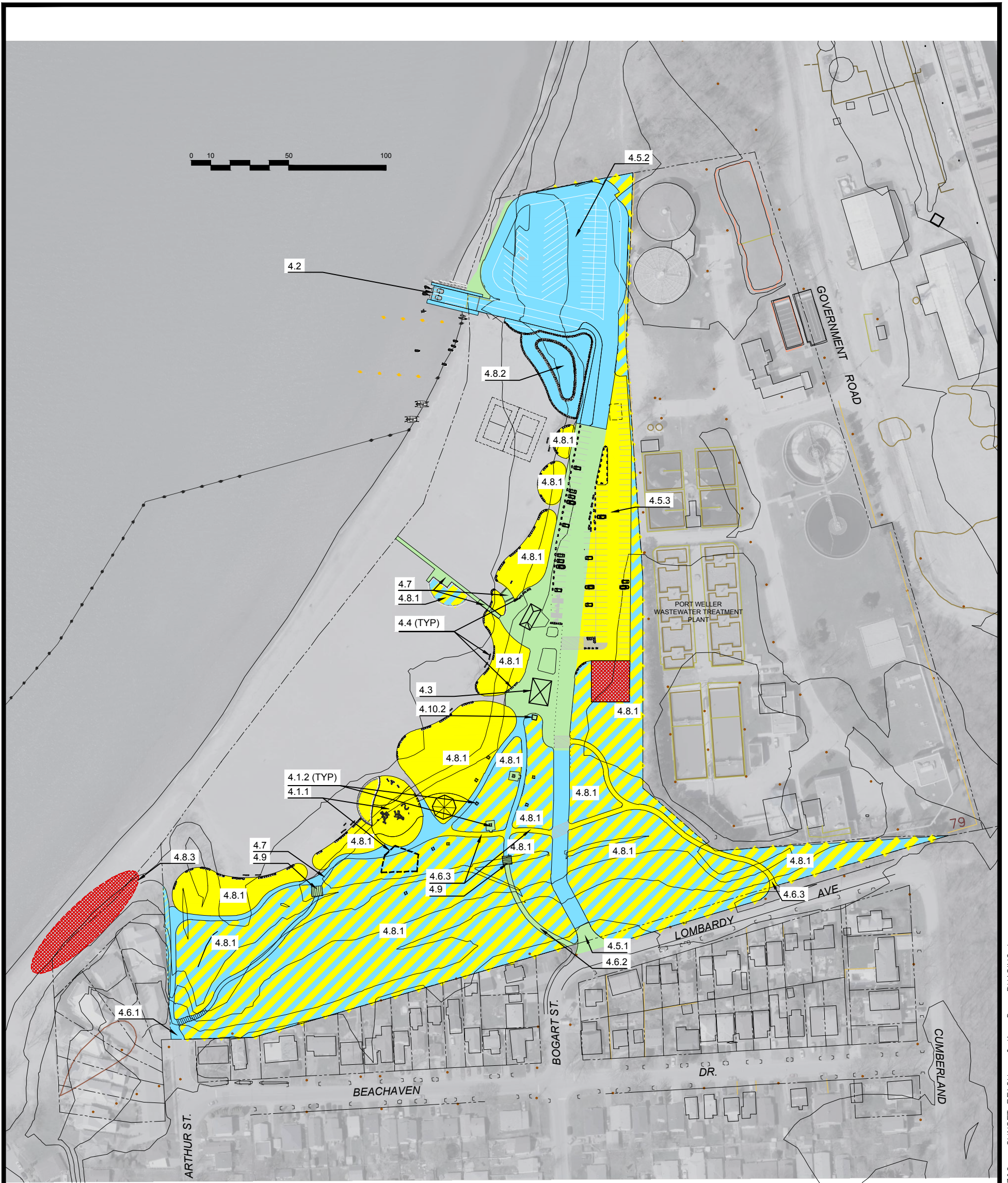
The Functional Plan will provide the necessary technical information required to move the project toward construction documentation and phased implementation.

SUNSET BEACH COMMUNITY VISION PLAN



-  TRAIL ACCESS
-  PEDESTRIAN TRAIL
-  BEACH PLANTING/DUNE MITIGATION
-  PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE
-  PROPOSED TREES
-  EXISTING TREES
-  PROPOSED FIRELANE





LEGEND:

NOTE: Numbers refer to line items in
Sunset Beach Community Vision Report - April 12, 2019

- 4.1.1 Playground
- 4.1.2 Picnic Areas
- 4.2 Boat Launch
- 4.3 Washroom
- 4.4 Site Furnishings
- 4.5.1 Lombardy/Bogart Street Entrance & Fire Access Route
- 4.5.2 North Parking Area & Fire Access Route
- 4.5.3 Main Parking Area
- 4.6.1 Arthur Street Entrance
- 4.6.2 Lombardy/Bogart Street Entrance
- 4.6.3 Lombardy Avenue, East Entrance
- 4.7 Trails
- 4.8.1 Trees & Vegetation
- 4.8.2 Beach & Sand Mitigation
- 4.8.3 Beach & Sand Mitigation
- 4.9 Drainage
- 4.10.2 Wayfinding & Signage

- PHASE 1
- PHASE 2
- PHASE 3
- OPTIONAL

PROJECT NAME	SUNSET BEACH		
TITLE	PHASING PLAN		
<p style="font-size: 8px;">Innovative, outside thinking. 270 Sherman Avenue North, Suite 315-MILL, Hamilton, ON L8L 6N4 Telephone: 905.881.7804 Fax: 905.882.2844 www.o-m-l.ca</p>	DATE : MARCH 15, 2019	SCALE : 1:2000	DRAWING NO. D-2
	DRAWN : DC/SP/PL	PROJECT : 1396	

