



## Media Release

# MBLDC to commission study aimed at pursuing UNESCO Global Geopark Designation

December 15, 2020 – Midland Bay Landing Development Corporation (MBLDC) announced on Wednesday, December 9, that it intends to commission a study regarding pursuing a UNESCO Global Geopark designation.

UNESCO is a global network of expertise, experience, potential partnerships and investment that brings the power of 191 countries committed to the knowledge sharing ideals of UNESCO.

Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas of international geological significance that are managed holistically for protection, education, and sustainable development. Geoparks celebrate regional heritage and sustain local communities.

Joining the UNESCO global network of 161 UNESCO Global Geoparks in 44 countries will enable the exchange of ideas and experiences that will have valuable cultural, economic, and trade benefits for Midland and the region.

“MBLDC’s mandate is to support economic development, community growth, and innovation. Having a UNESCO Global Geopark designation will act as the catalyst for branding and marketing MBL, Midland, and the region,” said Bill Kernohan, Chair of MBLDC. “In addition, we believe it will enhance development and investment opportunities that will benefit the whole area by expanding tourism with new global tourists and inviting development of the kind we envision for this property.”

One example of this is the Stonehammer Geopark in New Brunswick - North America’s first Geopark. Since designation in 2015, tourism has blossomed in St. John, five adjoining towns, and the Bay of Fundy area, Geoparks are not only about geology, but it’s also about people, society and culture. A UNESCO Geopark designation sends a strong message of excellence, research, culture and prosperity for communities like Midland who are aspiring to evolve into the new world economy and a changing planet.

The study that MBLDC is going to commission will develop a vision and positioning for a UNESCO Global Geopark and to outline the scope, process, stages, timeline, and budget required to obtain a Geopark designation through UNESCO.

Council unanimously approved MBLDC proceeding with the study.

Midland Bay Landing, through extensive public consultation, is planned as a 16-hectare mixed use commercial, retail, educational, and residential community adjoining a continuous waterfront promenade overlooking Georgian Bay and connected to new public parks. Connections to the revitalized downtown Midland and the deep-water harbour will create a destination for both residents and visitors.



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