



Waterfront Master Plan

November, 2025

Summary of Draft Recommendations



 **The Planning
Partnership**

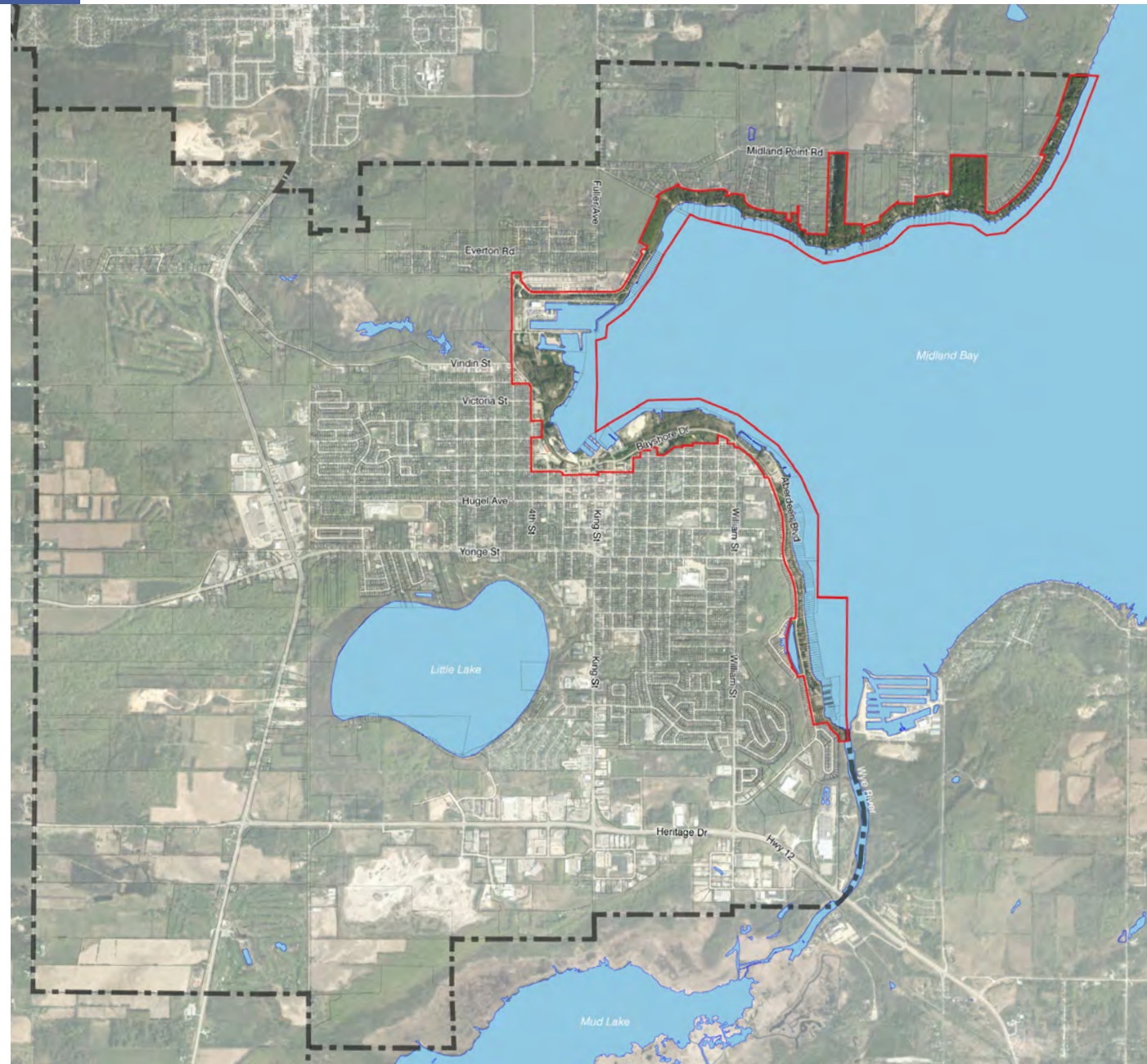
TCI Management Consultants
Baird

What is a Waterfront Master Plan?

A waterfront master plan is a big-picture plan that helps guide how the waterfront will grow and change over time.

The waterfront master plan will help the Town make informed decisions when planning for the future.

The waterfront spans 13 km of water's edge and aligns with the Official Plan's Waterfront Area on Schedule B.



What We've Heard So Far



Community Engagement so far:

- one-on-one conversations with residents, business owners, BIA, Midland Bay Sailing Club
- one-on-one conversations with members of council
- meetings with Town staff from all departments
- July public information session
- November public information session

* Eight Components of the Waterfront Master Plan

Ways to and along the waterfront

+

Trails

+

Water's edge green spaces

+

Boating (marinas, boating clubs,
cruise ship)

+

Events and activation

+

Natural heritage and shoreline stewardship

+

Guidelines for new development

+

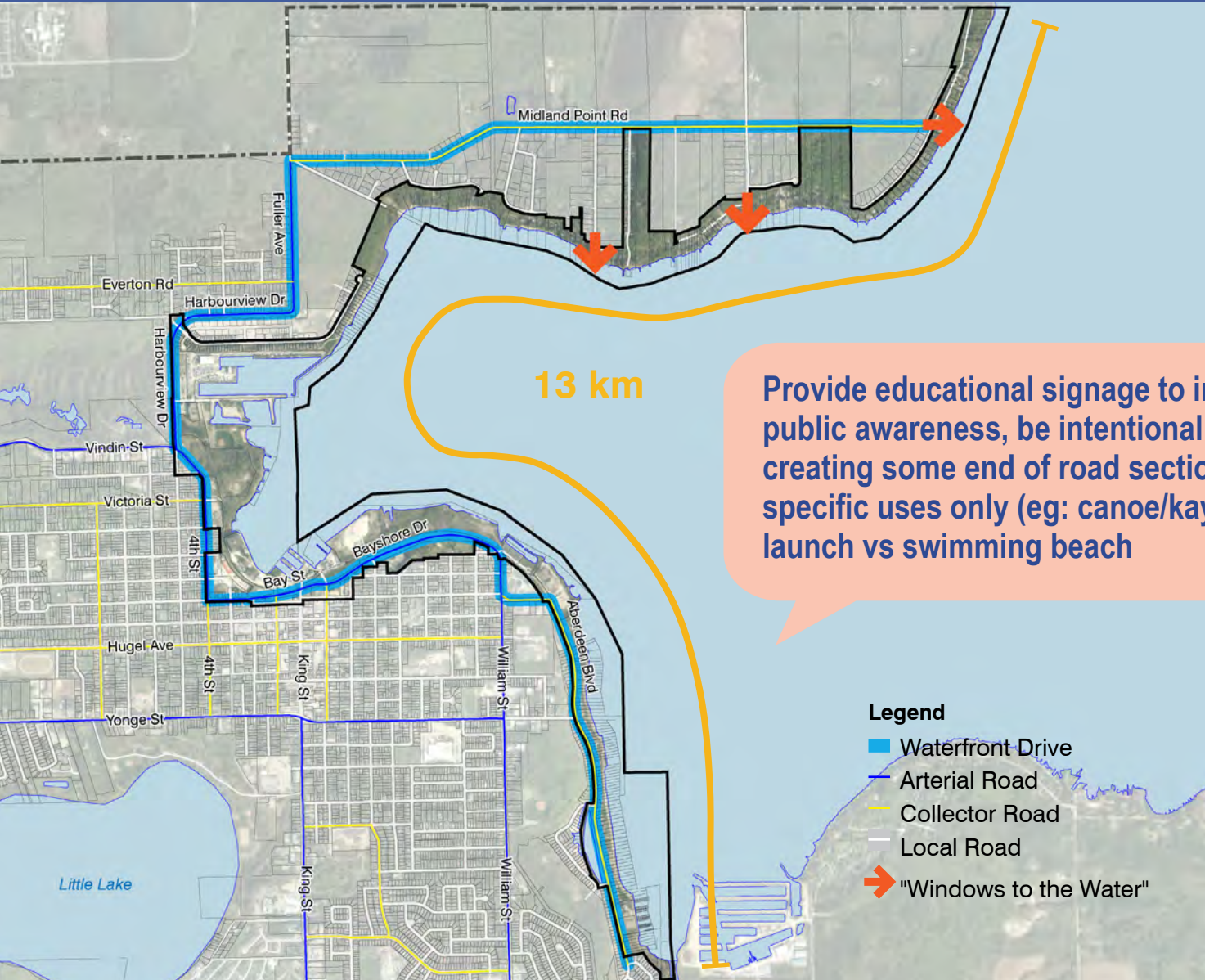
Wayfinding and signage



**Midland
Waterfront
Master Plan**

1. Ways To and Along the Waterfront

to enhance awareness of access to water's edge from north to south



- Sign the roads that follow the water's edge and together create a "waterfront drive". Locate signs on the "waterfront drive" for direction to key destinations.
- Sign the public roads that end at the water's edge as "windows to the water".
- Selectively clear brush/trees to open views from the "waterfront drive" through to water.



Ways To and Along the Waterfront - "windows to the water"

Examples of Windows to the Waterfront/road ends in Burlington



2. Trails

Mark trails along the water's edge, trail heads and distance markers



4 Waterfront Trail Segments

- 1 South (3,780 m)
- 2 Harbour (646 m)
- 3 Pete Pettersen Park (914 m)
- 4 North to Gawley (1,373 m)

Total: 6,713 m (6.7 km)

Add bike racks,
parking access
points, and end-of-
route facilities

Create programs like
adopt-a-tree, adopt-
a-path, student
involvement

Ensure accessibility
to events, beaches,
and water access

Extend and connect
promenade/trails (e.g.,
Midland Bay Landing,
Gawley to Puddicombe Rd)

Waterfront Trail Segment 1 - South



- maintain open fencing to keep eyes on the trail and to enhance safety for trail users.

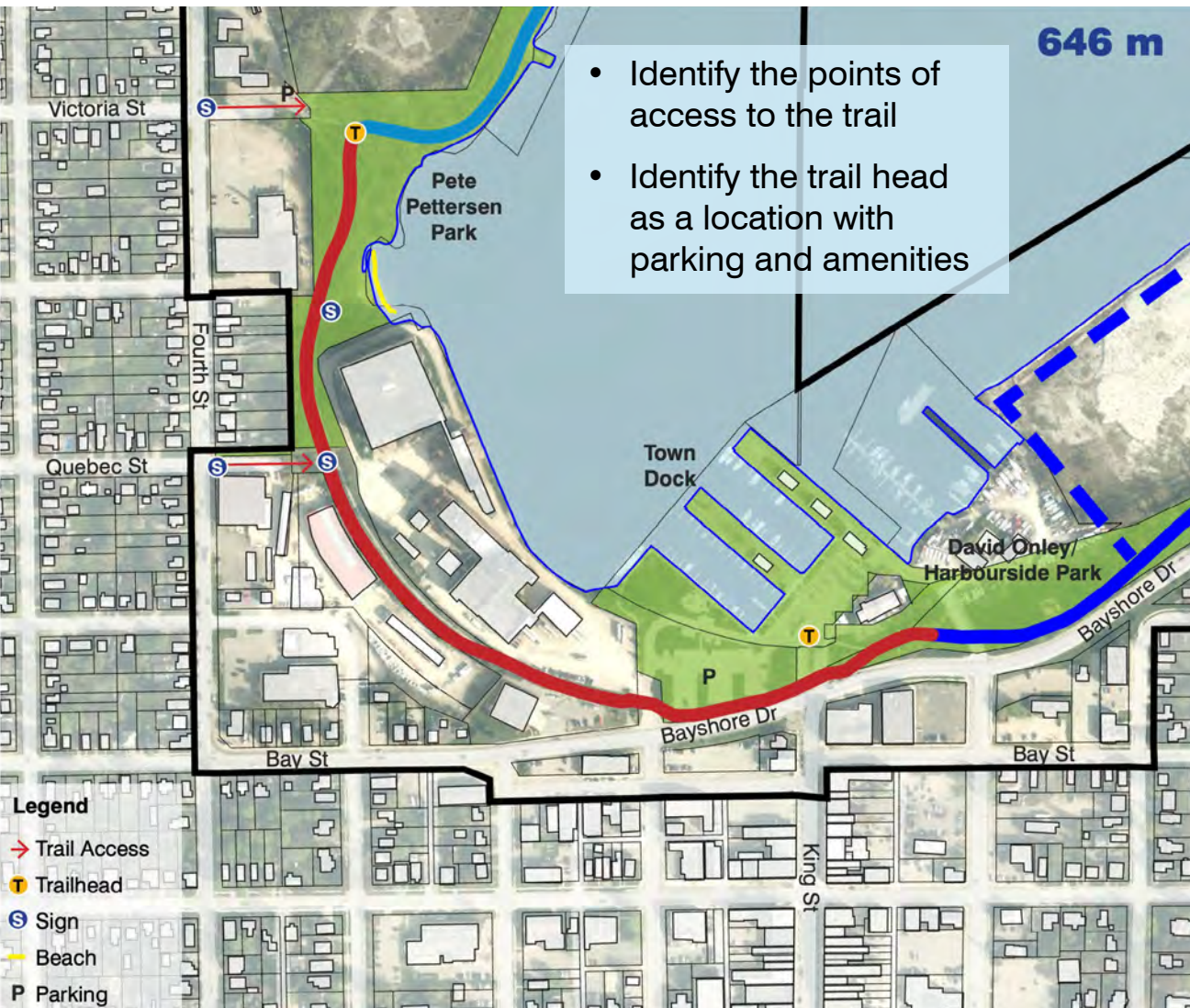


- consider limiting sports courts at the water's edge in favour of focusing on planting



- open access to the water's edge at Vas Kuchar Memorial Park and Veterans Waterfront Park

Waterfront Trail Segment 2 - Harbour



Waterfront Trail Segment 3 - Pete Pettersen Park

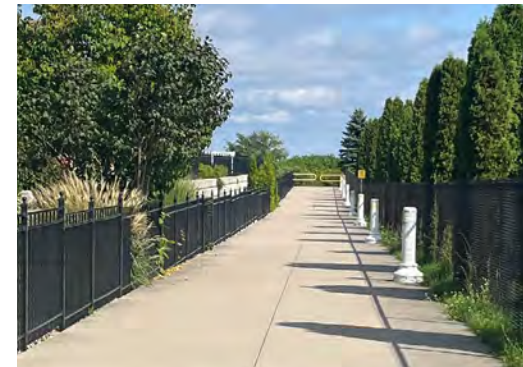


- Identify the points of access to the trail
- Identify the trail heads, locations with parking and amenities

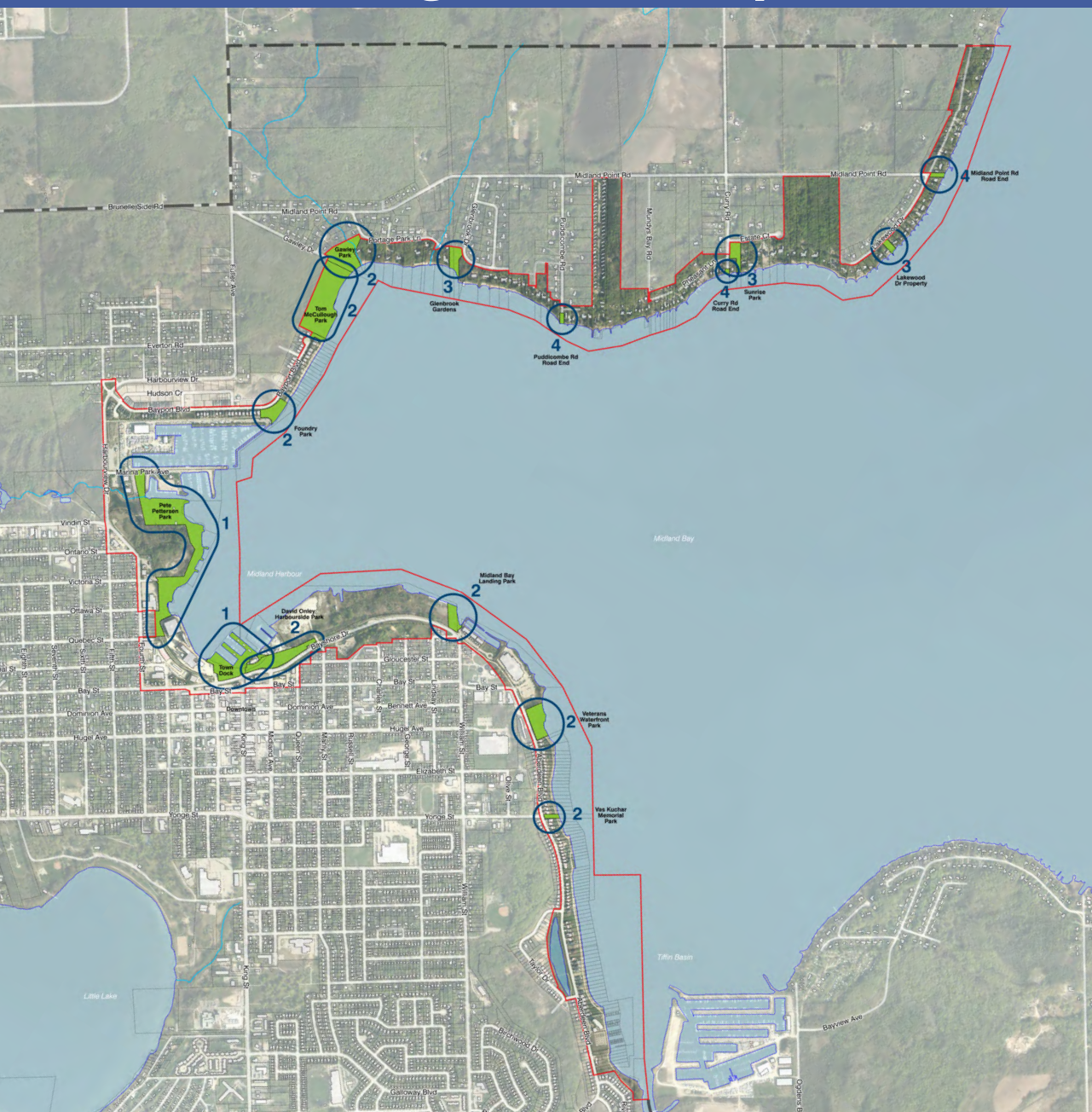
Waterfront Trail Segment 4 - North to Gawley



- Identify the points of access to the trail
- Identify the trail heads, locations with parking and amenities
- Consider removing the fencing from stormwater ponds along the trail



3. Water's Edge Green Space



20.75 Hectares (51 acres) of parkland

14 locations for access to the waterfront distributed across the Town

2 beaches

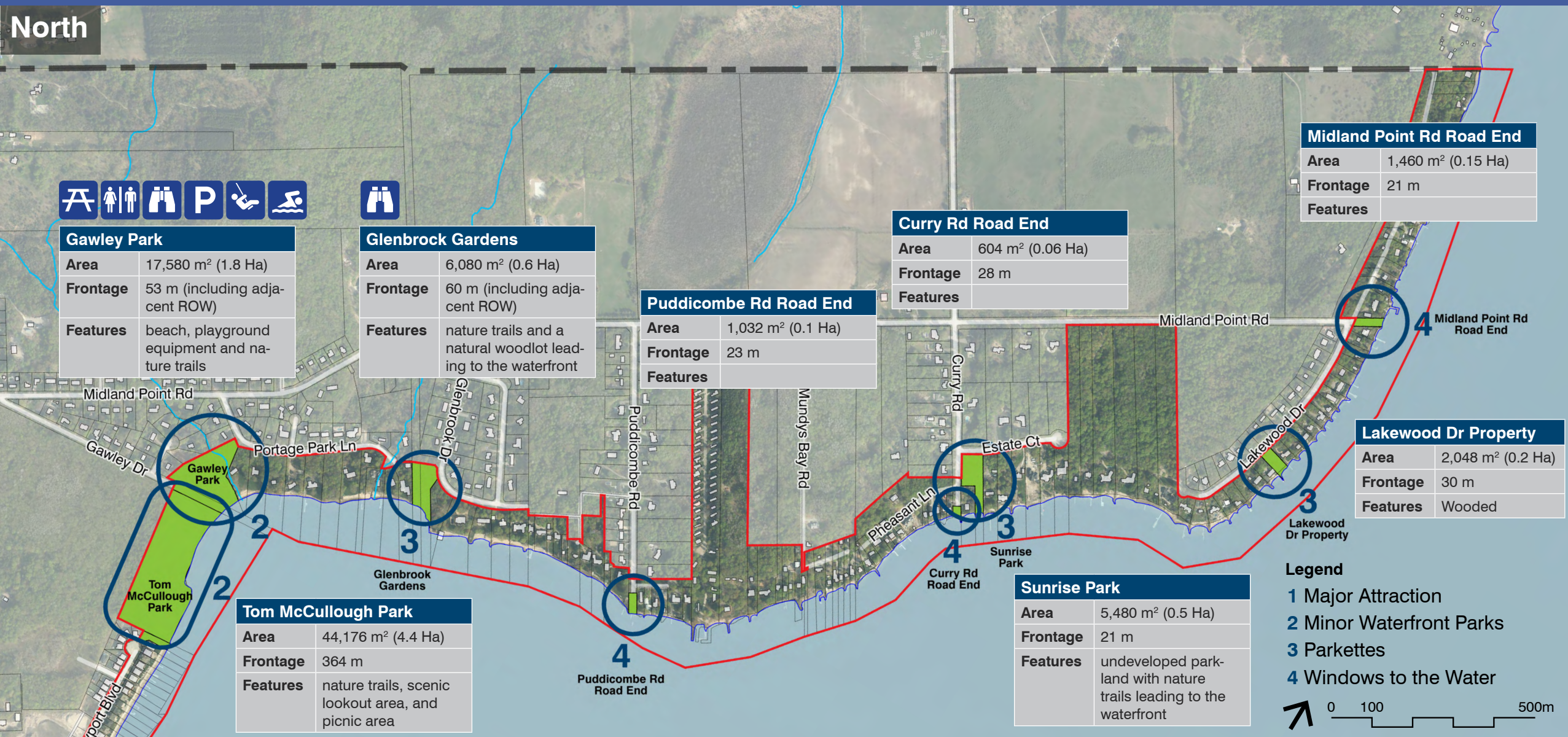
3 playgrounds

2 public washrooms

1 baseball diamond

Water's Edge Green Space

Establish a hierarchy of places of public access and recreation at the water's edge





Midland Point Road end

- sign as a "window to the water"
- maintain open, unencumbered access to the water's edge
- sign the trail to the water's edge
- provide seating, waste receptacle
- allow on street parking



Lakewood Property

- sign as a waterfront parkette
- maintain open, unencumbered access to the water's edge
- sign the trail to the water's edge
- provide seating, waste receptacle



Sunrise Park

- already signed as a park
- maintain open, unencumbered access to the water's edge
- sign the trail to the water's edge
- continue to provide picnic table



Gawley Park

- sign from Fuller Avenue, Gawley Drive or Midland Point Road



Curry Road End

- sign as a "window to the water"
- allow on street parking
- provide seating, waste receptacle
- review permit allowing residential dock along frontage of road end



Puddicombe Road End

- sign as a "window to the water"
- allow on street parking
- provide seating, waste receptacle
- review permit allowing private use to dock a barge
- allow on street parking



Glenbrook Gardens

- sign as a public waterfront park
- allow on street parking
- sign the trail to the water's edge
- provide seating, waste receptacle
- monitor dumping of yard waste into the wooded area



Tom McCullough Park

- New residential development should include a landscaped buffer next to the park and add more public access points to the waterfront.
- Incorporate the small park at the north end of Bayport Blvd into Tom McCullough Park and add signage indicating public access.



Foundry Park

- sign as waterfront park
- co-design with residents to add play structure, shade structure, trees/ planting, trail access to stairs leading to water's edge



Town Dock

- reclaim some of parking as open green/event space by re-organizing and maintaining existing parking
- augment planting on piers
- new harbour office/ washrooms
- expanded pop up/seasonal retail



Pete Petersen Park

- expand/enhance boat and trailer parking
- sign at the driveway entrance to the park



Midland Bay Landing

- sign at the driveway off Bayshore Drive
- sign for canoe and kayak launching
- consider providing storage for canoes and kayaks

Vas Kuchar Memorial

- permit on street parking on Aberdeen Blvd
- consider opportunity to create access to the water's edge



David Onley

Harbourside Park

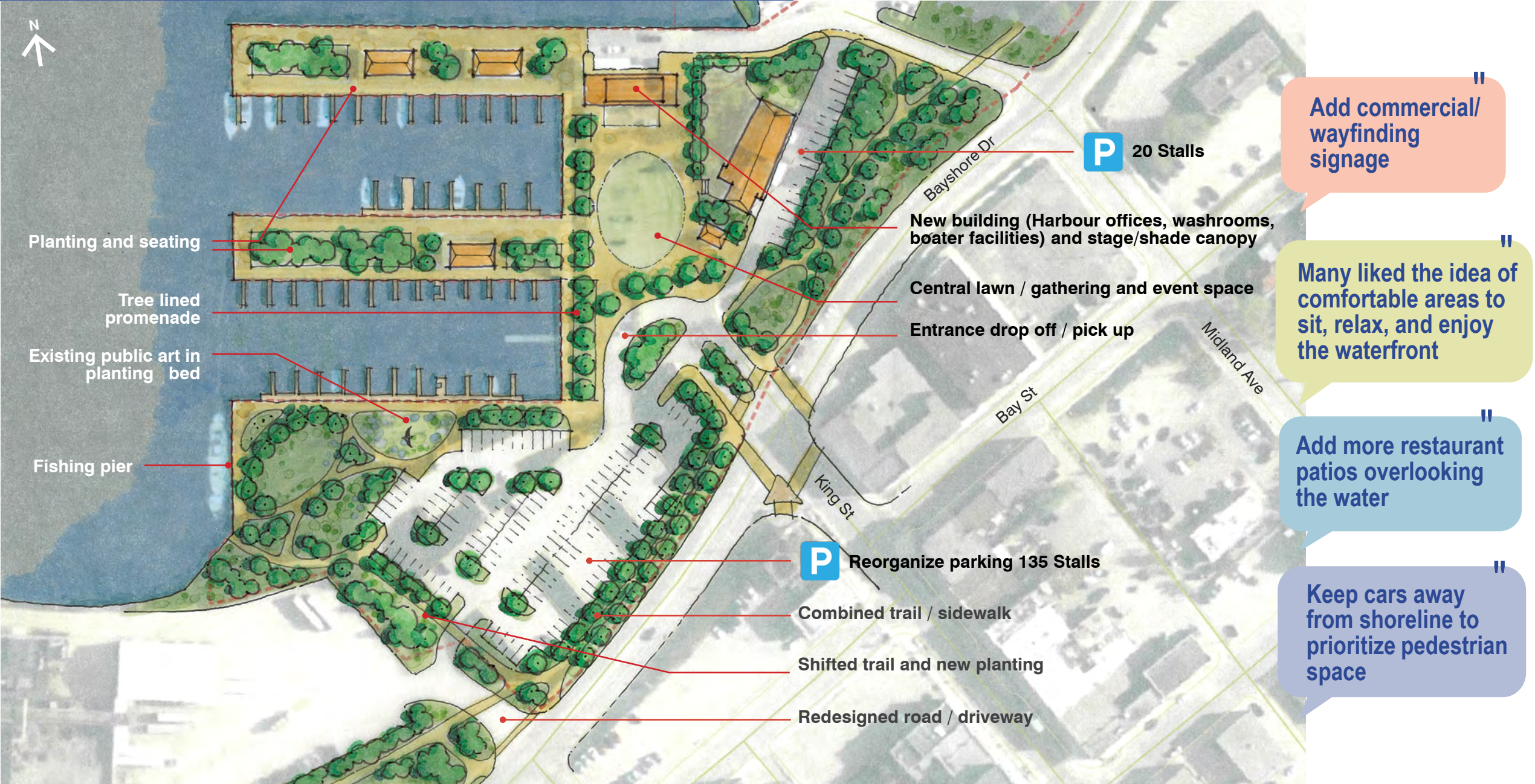
- consider additional tree planting, shade structure



Veterans Waterfront Park

- upgrade heritage signage
- permit on street parking on Aberdeen Blvd
- formalize informal trails to the water's edge

Ideas for Town Dock



Ideas for Pete Pettersen Park



Encourage safer paths from parking to playground/beach

Shade shelters, pergolas, and shaded seating were frequently praised and described as desperately needed

Make the beach more usable: regular cleaning (seaweed, goose poop), dredging, and water quality measures

Retain more vehicle/trailer parking and improve launch access and traffic flow

Trail direction to piers and beach to the south

Design Elements



Design Elements



Design Elements



4. Boating



- Public Marina
- Private Marina
- Cruise Ship Dock
- Public Boat Launch

Add kayak and canoe rentals

Improve safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and children near slips/launches

Add restaurants/coffee shops along the waterfront for boaters

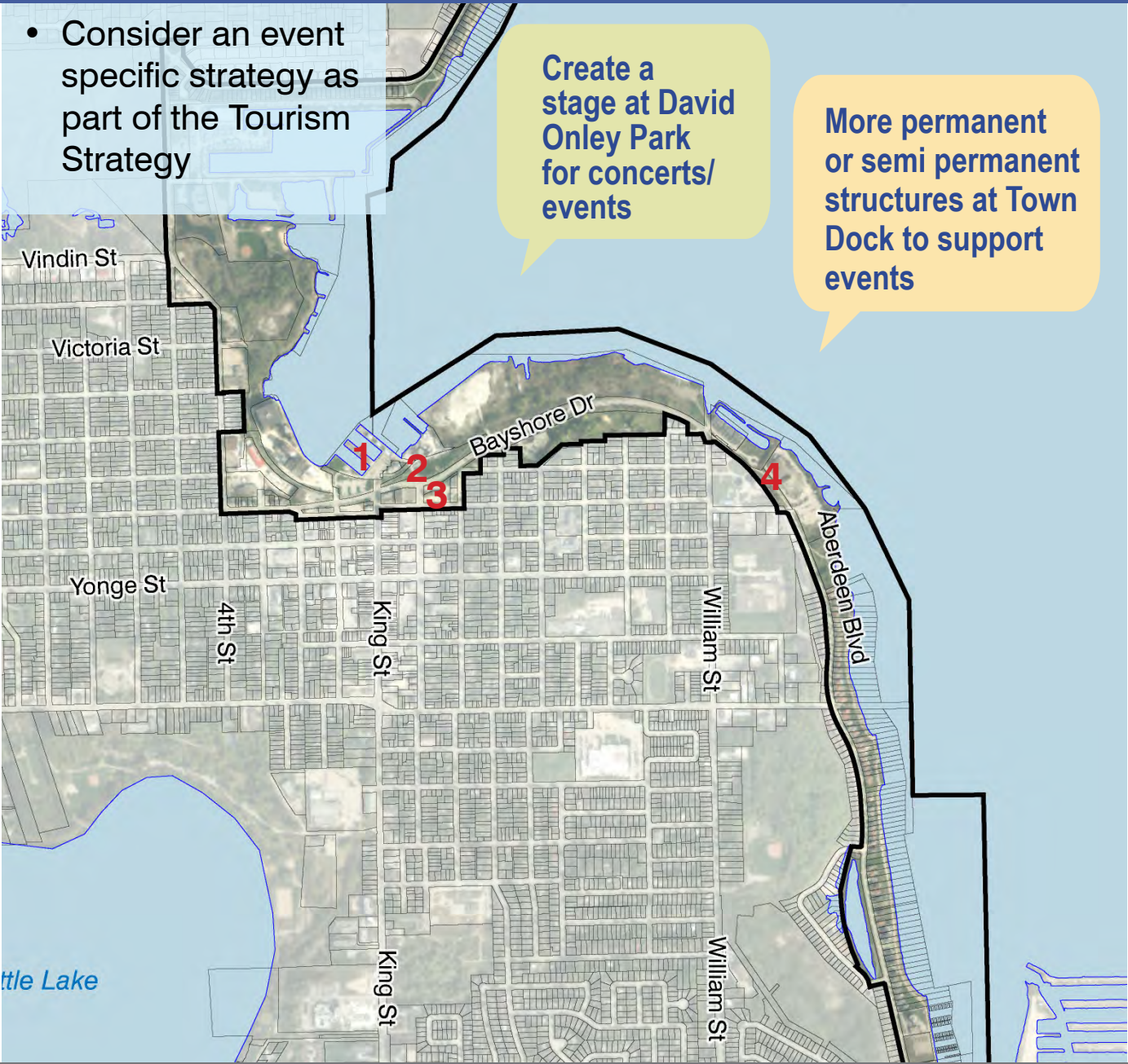
Add more boat launches, boat slips, and fishing piers on the town side

Boaters are over-prioritized by the Town

- Attract more cruise ship business to Midland
- Continued upgrading of Town slips
- Upgrade parking at Town boat launch

5. Events: continue to accommodate; significant economic benefit

- Consider an event specific strategy as part of the Tourism Strategy



Some of the events currently held:

1 Town Dock

- Kids Fishing Derby
- Ontario's Best Butter Tart Festival
- Tall Ships Festival (North Pier)
- Georgian Bay Tugboat Festival (North Pier)
- Kindest Day of the Year
- Southern Georgian Bay Chamber of Commerce BBQ (Centre Pier)

2 David Onley/Harbourside Park

- Ontario's Best Butter Tart Festival
- Midland Mural Festival
- Butter Tart Trot
- Midland Pride
- Poutine Feast
- Northern Heat Rib Series (RibFest)

3 Parking Lot at Midland Ave and Bayshore Dr

- Southern Georgian Bay Farmers' Market

4 Along Waterfront Trail

- Butter Tart Trot
- Charity/Awareness Walks (various organizations)

6. Natural Heritage

The framework for an "environment first" approach to the Waterfront Master Plan



Naturalized Planting at & along the Shoreline

- shoreline areas provide ecological corridors with trees, shrubs and grasses acting as filters to prevent pollutants from getting into the water by trapping sediment, capturing runoff, creating habitat and preventing erosion.
- consider naturalized plantings to create a consistent and robust edge along the shoreline.
- create a Shoreline Stewardship Guide and distribute to all waterfront landowners
- consider recognizing naturalized waterfronts with a sign/logo

Habitat Restoration

- consider establishing "no mow" zones along the shoreline to increase habitat and promote stabilization
- avoid the use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides along the shoreline

Preserve green, forest and wetland areas

Plan for climate change impacts (storms, protective features)

7. Direction for Development: ensure an appropriate transition to the waterfront



Key Policies from the Official Plan help shape development

Guiding Principles

- Protect **views and vistas** to the Waterfront, improve pedestrian access
- Attract long-term **economic development opportunities** on the Waterfront

Waterfront Area

- Ensure **public access** to shoreline in all new development and design high-quality waterfront buildings that integrate with surroundings.
- Enhance **public trail** (Trans Canada Trail), parks, Town dock, and views to support Downtown.
- Follow provincial **stormwater management** standards.
- Expand **publicly owned waterfront lands**.
- Use **climate-resilient** building practices.

Waterfront Corridor

- Strengthen Downtown-Waterfront connections and support **active transportation** along and across Bayshore Dr.
- Require buildings to **frame streets** and be close to front lot lines.
- Encourage **at-grade retail/restaurant uses** at key corners and support mid- to high-rise mixed-use with residential above ground-floor commercial.
- Ensure **transitions** to nearby low-rise areas.
- Minimize and screen surface **parking**; prefer underground/structured parking.
- Include **mid-block pedestrian** connections.
- **Building heights:** 3–6 storeys (greater height subject to compatibility review).

Official Plan policy is the foundation for new Design Guidelines

New Roads/Development Blocks:

- Roads and blocks layouts should be designed to provide direct frontage to waterfront lands, for a minimum of 50% of the development (single-loaded roads)
- Roads should be aligned to provide views/ vistas to the waterfront, at key locations



Sidewalks:

- New sidewalks / walkways should be connected to the waterfront trail

Private Amenity Areas:

- Private amenity areas should be located adjacent to the waterfront.



Building Setbacks:

- Rear setbacks to waterfront - 10m (4m of which should be a landscaped buffer)
- Front setbacks to waterfront - 6m
- Side setbacks to waterfront - 6m (3m of which should be a landscaped buffer)

Note: setbacks would be measured from high water mark, if applicable.

Building Heights/Massing:

- Buildings should not extend beyond a 45 degree angular plane, measured from the property line, at-grade.

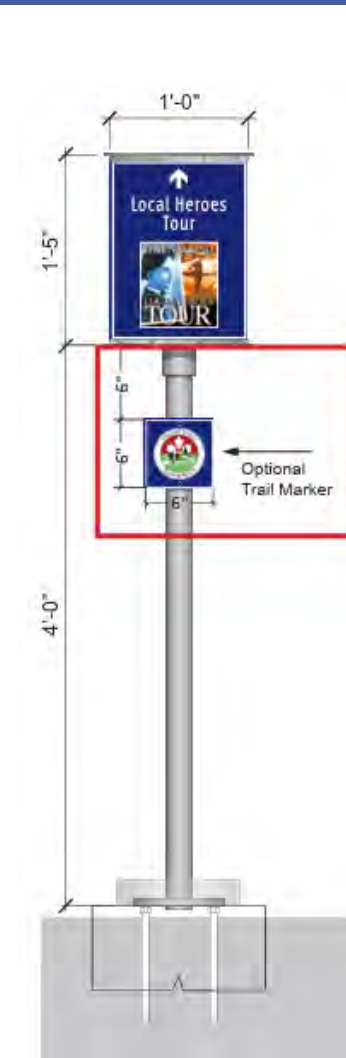


Landscaping:

- A minimum 3-4m wide landscaped buffer (between the ROW or Side/Rear Lot Line) should be provided adjacent to the waterfront. This is not a separate block but a landscaped area within the required setback, which may otherwise be sod or planted with ornamental species instead of native species).
- Landscape buffers adjacent to the waterfront should be planted with 100% native species.

8. Wayfinding/Signage

to enhance awareness of the harbour, waterfront open spaces and trail. To ensure seamless connection between Downtown Midland and the Harbour.



The Town is implementing new signage/wayfinding that includes the waterfront.

Design and implement waterfront specific branding.

Identify locations for:

- overall waterfront maps
- interpretive maps/information
- directional signs for the Waterfront Drive
- trail directional and distance markers (distance to trail entry/exit, washrooms, beaches, etc)
- information kiosks
- destination signs for key waterfront parks



Summary of Draft Recommendations

Recommendation
Ways To and Along the Waterfront
1 Create Waterfront Drive
2 Windows to the Water Improvements
Trails
3 Public Trail Along Water's Edge Through Midland Bay Landing
4 Provide Seating, Bicycle Racks, Waste Receptacles Along The Trails
5 Develop Protocol for Regular Maintenance of the Trail
6 Waterfront Trail Access Markers and Signage
7 Clear and Sign Access to the Water's Edge in Veteran's Waterfront Park
8 Provide Access to Water's Edge at Vas Kuchar Memorial Park
9 Sign and Remove Barriers to All Trail Access Points
10 Maintain Open Fencing Along Waterfront Trail
11 Clear and Sign Access to Trail at Quebec and Victoria Streets
12 Add Direction/Distance Signs on Trail
13 Consider Pop Up Retail at Town Dock Park
14 Add Trail Signage at Pete Petersen Park Entrance
15 Identify Pete Petersen Park as a Trail Head
16 Identify Trail Routes to Water's Edge North of Grain Elevator
17 Add Trail Markers to Identify Entry/Exit Points
18 Gawley Park Trail Head Improvements
19 Removing Fencing Around Storm Water Management Ponds

Water's Edge Green Space
20 Town Dock Park Revitalization
21 Pete Pettersen Park Revitalization
22 Vas Kuchar Memorial Park Improvements
23 Veterans Waterfront Park Improvements
24 David Onley/Harbourside Park Improvements
25 Foundry Park Improvements
26 Tom McCullough Park Improvements
27 Gawley Park Improvements
28 Glenbrook Gardens Improvements
29 Sunrise Park Improvements
30 Lakewood Dr Property Improvements
31 Windows to the Water Improvements
Boating
32 Attract More Cruise Ship Business
Events & Activation
33 Develop a Special Events Plan as Part of the Tourism Strategy
Natural Heritage
34 Naturalized Planting At & Along the Shoreline
35 Habitat Restoration
Guidelines for Development
36 Guidelines for Developments Abutting Waterfront Parks & Trails
Wayfinding/Signage
37 Wayfinding and Signage Strategy for the Waterfront

Ways to and along the waterfront

+

Trails

+

Water's edge green spaces

+

Boating

+

Events and activation

+

Natural heritage and shoreline stewardship

+

Guidelines for new development

+

Wayfinding and signage



**Midland
Waterfront
Master Plan**