

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA

REPORT NO. CSD-2024-0008

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF
COUNCIL**

May 29, 2024

SUBJECT: 2024 TOWN OF GEORGINA WATERFRONT PARKS MASTER PLAN

1. RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council receive Report No. CSD-2024-0008 prepared by the Community Services Department, dated May 29, 2024, concerning future capital improvements proposed at the Town's waterfront parks and road ends;
2. That Council receive and endorse in principle the Town of Georgina's Waterfront Parks Master Plan, dated November 2023, prepared by The Planning Partnership Ltd., subject to annual budget deliberations;
3. That staff report back through the annual budget deliberation process to activate priority capital improvements outlined in the master plan starting in 2025.

2. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the key findings and recommendations contained in the Waterfront Parks Master Plan (WPMP). Staff are seeking Council's receipt and endorsement in principle of the WPMP with the understanding that Staff will report back through the annual budget deliberation process to initiate a selection of priority capital improvements outlined in the master plan, starting in 2025.

3. BACKGROUND:

Within recent years, Staff identified a need for a sustainable waterfront strategy and action plan to address park overcrowding, improved pedestrian access, parking issues, and other desired infrastructure improvements along The Town of Georgina's (Town) waterfront. As early as 2004, the Town's Leisure Services Master Plan observed that 40% of residents felt that waterfront parks were not meeting their needs. Factors such as overcrowded beaches, poor pedestrian access, and a lack of parking were flagged as ongoing issues in need of a solution (Town of Georgina Leisure Services Master Plan, 2004). The Town's 2014 Recreational Needs Study recognized strong support for investing additional public funds to improve the waterfront, with 92% of respondents supporting additional spending to improve waterfront parks and beaches.

The Town's 2024 Economic Development and Tourism Strategy further highlighted the value and importance of the waterfront as a strong driver for positive economic impacts for local businesses.

Developed over three years between 2020 – 2023, The WPMP provides a framework for decision making for waterfront parks and road ends across 52 kilometers of shoreline on Lake Simcoe. The WPMP establishes a cohesive vision for waterfront parks and provides direction for Council and Staff on future operations, management, and investment at these public spaces.

The Planning Partnership conducted a master planning exercise which examined the Town's waterfront parks and road ends and identified the most impactful improvements over the short term (2024 – 2030), medium term (2030+), and longer term. Community engagement was an integral part of this process.

The master plan will be used by Staff to inform a 10-year capital works forecast and will guide all design development activities within these open spaces. Gradual implementation of this plan will result in an improved and more connected waterfront parks network to meet the diverse needs of residents and visitors to our community.

4. ANALYSIS:

A critical deliverable from the master planning process was an analysis of seven Destination Waterfront Parks, nine Community Waterfront Parks, and 27 public road ends. Concept plans were developed for key waterfront parks to use as a foundation for detailed planning and design. Some of the smaller Community Waterfront Parks include a description of possible changes and opportunities to consider but do not include a concept drawing.

Waterfront parks were categorized as either 'Destination' or 'Community' parks based on their facilities, size, location and access. Destination Waterfront Parks generally serve residents from across the Town and are destination points for visitors. Community Waterfront Parks primarily serve local residents and communities.

Of the seven Destination Waterfront Parks, Mossington Wharf and the Maskinonge River Bridge were further categorized and assigned a priority score. Priority scores are summarized in Table 2 of this report. The priority scoring considered four criteria:

Table 1: Priority Scoring

Priority Score Category	Examples
In need of improvement	Degraded landscape, play equipment in need of repair, improves safety of a space
Benefits the most Georgina residents	High number of residents within a 15-minute walk, or 1.2 km radius
Solves a Problem	Creates more parking, creates year-round washrooms, improves drainage/erosion problems
Investment will have impact	Supports nearby businesses, creates opportunities for new businesses, creates opportunity for visible signature waterfront park

The master plan recommends site specific improvements at each waterfront park, order of magnitude construction costs for the recommended work, and priorities and phasing for implementation. The master plan also identifies immediate next steps and recommendations concerning operations and management of these public spaces (parking, economic development opportunities, wayfinding, marinas and boat launch operations where applicable, emerging trends etc.).

The 27 publicly owned road ends included in the WPMP offer a tremendous opportunity to expand the community's access and enjoyment of the lake. They provide points from which to view the water, launch a canoe or kayak, and places to swim and fish. These opportunities are particularly important to thousands of Georgina residents who do not own waterfront properties. Where road ends connect with the waterfront, the WPMP mapped, photographed and categorized sites based on existing conditions at each location. The master plan identifies opportunities for improvements at these public road ends while at the same time recognizing that there is a desire to balance public access to the waterfront with the needs of local neighbourhoods.

5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

“Delivering Service Excellence” – Ensuring waterfront parks, marinas, and road end assets meet the needs and expectations of residents of Georgina.

6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:

Recommended capital improvements will be brought for council approval through the annual budget deliberation process generally in accordance with the master plan, starting in 2025. The financial and budgetary impacts for all capital improvements recommended in the WPMP are summarized below. Some of the concepts, particularly for Destination Waterfront Parks, include significant place-making projects that will change the character of a park. Staff anticipate having to scale projects and recommended improvements to align with municipal budgetary constraints. Significant place-making changes to the parks may also disrupt park use for a season or two.

The total cost of all capital improvements identified in the WPMP is \$39.8M excl. HST. Order of magnitude (OOM) cost estimates do not include construction contingencies or fees for design and engineering.

Table 2: Summary of costs for all capital improvements recommended in WPMP

Waterfront Parks / Road End	Park Category	Priority Score	Ward	WPMP OOM Cost Estimates
Willow Beach Park	Destination	12	3	\$6,550,000
Jackson's Point Harbour	Destination	12	4	\$2,100,000
Bonnie Park	Destination	12	4	\$3,180,000
Malone Wharf	Destination	12	4	\$365,000
De La Salle Park	Destination	10	4	\$7,520,000
Willow Wharf Park/ClearWater Farm	Destination	8	3	\$1,040,000
Holmes Point Park	Destination	6	5	\$3,390,000
Mossington Wharf	Other	6	4	-
North Gwillimbury Park	Destination	5	3	\$6,325,000
Pefferlaw Dam Park	Destination	4	5	\$2,570,000
Maskinonge River Bridge	Other	4	2	-
Adeline Park	Community	-	1	\$1,890,000
Young's Harbour Park	Community	-	1	\$3,337,500
Glenwoods Park	Community	-	1	\$205,000
Clarendon Beach Park	Community	-	2	\$150,000
Rayners Park	Community	-	3	\$205,000
Franklin Beach Conservation Area	Community	-	4	\$550,000
Virginia Wharf	Community	-	5	-
Riverview Park	Community	-	5	\$195,000
Corner Park	Community	-	5	\$195,000
Road Ends	Other	-	-	-
Total				\$39,767,500

WPMP, The Planning Partnership, 2023

Staff will need to reprioritize, remove, or make adjustments to the recommended improvements in the capital work plans, based on the fact that economic conditions and the needs of the Town's waterfront parks may change over time. Staff will seek efficiencies, including coordination with other capital projects and explore grant funding opportunities.

Some capital improvements identified in the WPMP overlap with projects already approved through the 2024 capital budget. These projects include \$375K for the playground replacement program (includes waterfront and non-waterfront parks), \$50K for the picnic table and outdoor furniture replacement programs (includes waterfront and

non-waterfront parks), \$10K for bike repair stations, and \$15K for drainage improvements at Jackson's Point Harbour.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:

Community engagement was an integral part of the development of the WPMP. The master plan engagement process included public consultation elements throughout the planning process to provide residents with formal opportunities to weigh-in on future work at the Town's waterfront parks and road ends.

Community engagement was divided into two parts, with Part 1 beginning in early 2020 with a focus on the most popular waterfront parks. Part 2 on the remaining waterfront parks began in 2022. Consultation initiatives throughout the full process included 22 online workshops, 5 park pop-ups, 2 online surveys with a total of 1,555 people providing responses, and 4 public presentations to Council. Engagement efforts also included individual meetings with other stakeholders including the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation, local community associations, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, York Region Police, and others.

The resultant feedback is summarized in the master plan and has informed all the recommended improvements in the WPMP.

8. CONCLUSION:

Staff recommend that Council receive and endorse in principle, the WPMP. Staff will return to Council through the annual budget deliberation process with a selection of priority capital improvements as outlined in master plan.

APPROVALS

Prepared By: Courtney Rennie
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Reviewed By: Stefan Hordatt, P.Eng., MBA
Manager, Capital Projects
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Reviewed By: Bob Ferguson
Manager, Parks Development and Operations
Community Services

Recommended By: Steve Lee-Young
Director, Community Services

Recommended By: Rob Wheeler, CPA, CA
Deputy CAO/ Treasurer
Office of the Deputy CAO

Approved By: Ryan Cronsberry
Chief Administrative Officer
Office of the CAO

Attachments:

Attachment 1 – *Town of Georgina Waterfront Master Plan (November 2023) prepared by The Planning Partnership Ltd.*