



TOWN OF INNISFIL STAFF REPORT

Staff Report No.: DSR-051-19
Date: May 22, 2019
To: Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Members of Council
From: Tim Cane, Manager of Land Use Planning
Gaelen Pierce, Planner
Subject: Innisfil Beach Park Master Plan Update

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council receive Staff Report DSR-051-19 dated May 22, 2019 regarding the Innisfil Beach Park Master Plan Update;
2. That Council direct Staff to continue to develop park design alternatives on the basis of the vision and principles outlined in this report;
3. That Council direct Staff to schedule a community consultation meeting for the beginning of August to gather feedback on park design alternatives for the purposes of selecting a preferred option, inviting all of Council to attend; and,
4. That staff be directed to report back to Council in due course, to report on the outcomes of the public consultation process and timing for the completion of the Innisfil Beach Park Master Plan later this year.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The purpose of this report is to provide a stepping stone in establishing the ongoing vision for Innisfil Beach Park (IBP). This report reflects the extensive feedback collected to date and describes the next key steps in developing options that may ultimately form the longer term vision for the park. Ongoing direction from Council, combined with feedback received to date will result in a more effective Innisfil Beach Park Master Plan (IBPMP).

The draft vision and principles outlined in this report have been prepared to guide the development of design alternatives which will confront persistent challenges in the park, such as vehicular congestion, underutilized park areas, and tensions between local park needs and non-local tourist users.

The long term role of the IBPMP is to provide for a vision for the park while a parallel and complementary operational plan is developed with support from the Innisfil Beach Park Ad Hoc Committee and Operations Team.

This report describes consultation to date, establishes a methodology intended to guide the ongoing development and selection of plan alternatives for the park, and sets forth a statement of guiding principles and vision of the park for Council consideration. A timeline is also provided outlining the milestones in the master planning process, including additional community consultation.

BACKGROUND:

Location

Situated on the western shoreline of Lake Simcoe, IBP is located on the north side of Innisfil Beach Road (the 8th Line) and east of 25 Sideroad. Regarded as the Town's premier park, IBP is approximately 28 hectares (70 acres) in area with just over 1,000 metres of shoreline along Lake Simcoe.

Prior Direction from Council

The IBPMP project was approved by Council under the 2018 Budget item PLN78. The increasing use of IBP and challenges within the surrounding community were determined to require a more comprehensive review of uses within the park and an update to the existing Master Plan *Future Directions* (Attachment 3). Council approved a funding allocation of \$40,000 for these purposes.

Additionally, extension of the Downtown Commercial area designation from west of 25 Sideroad along lands south of IBP has shifted the planned built form of areas surrounding the park. The IBPMP is the appropriate mechanism for defining the relationship between the Innisfil Beach Road intensification corridor and municipal parklands, and will, in part, define the appropriate re-development of these lands.

Numerous other IBP improvement projects were approved in the 2018 Budgets, including placeholder funds for the purpose of implementing the IBPMP (2021-2027), placeholder funding for the Innisfil Beach Park Ad Hoc Committee, previously planned trail and park amenity improvements, and scheduled repair and maintenance projects. Additionally, funds were allocated for the purpose of acquiring lands related to a multi-field sportsplex and for dock infrastructure. Impacts to existing fields within the Park will need to be coordinated in concert with planned improvements for any future sportsplex.

Past Park Planning Initiatives

In 2002, following the adoption of a *Culture, Parks and Recreation Master Plan (2002)*, the Town initiated a comprehensive planning exercise to develop the park, called the *Innisfil Beach Park: Future Directions Plan (2004)*.

The *Future Directions Plan* set out policies, standards and recommendations for the purpose of guiding future planning decisions and capital improvements within the park. Three goals and several supporting objectives, drawn from the *Culture, Parks, and Recreation Master Plan (2002)*, formed the basis for several design alternatives put forward by the *Future Directions Plan*:

Goals	Key Objectives
1. Accommodate the range of active and passive recreational uses currently existing in the park;	

<p>2. Conserve the atmosphere of the park as a natural open space;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitigate existing conflicts between existing park uses and their users • Recognize the role of the park in serving the local neighborhood and municipality as a whole, together with regional and seasonal patrons. • Promote safe, security and accessibility through the design • Engage the public in a detailed design process • Accommodate new park uses and users where feasible while maintaining or enhancing the existing character of the park
<p>3. Enhance the existing facilities and complement the existing uses with new facilities identified in the Master Plan process.</p>	

The public consultation program for the Plan evolved directly from the Culture, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and was intended to build upon public input collected through that process. The program included two design charrettes, a public meeting to review three design concepts, and proceeded through a review by a steering committee before final presentation to Council.

At that time, the key concerns of residents were related to congestion of cars and park users, traffic volumes outside the park, finding balance between serving local and regional users, provision of additional sports fields, congestion associated with the parks only boat launch, and the condition of existing facilities. Those concerns and findings from 2002-2004 continue to be identified with feedback received in recent years.

The *Future Directions Plan* presented three concept plan alternatives, the first offering a minimal expansion plan which dealt primarily with updates and alterations to existing conditions; the second offering a moderate expansion of facilities which dealt with key access issues and additions to sports fields; and third offering the greatest degree of expansion and change to the park, introducing numerous additional facilities. The third option was selected as a preferred concept plan and adopted as the Future Direction Plan for the park.

Though not all initiatives proposed in the *Future Directions Plan* were implemented since 2004, nor were all key concerns addressed by the proposed design, the benefits of the past master planning process are evident in the today's expanded facility and programming offerings at the Town's largest urban park.

Existing Conditions

The park today functions as the Town's premier urban park, attracting residents from across the municipality and guests from the broader region. A greater number of regional users have become aware of the park as a result of its clean and safe waters, range of supported uses, and its convenient location. Pressures have been noted on the park related to the growing population and visitor numbers from both Innisfil and neighbouring municipalities.

Since the vision reflected in the *Future Directions Plan* was adopted, park services, amenities, and supporting infrastructure have been improved extensively, largely in accordance with the plan, including:

- Asphaltting park roads and parking surfaces for both cars and boat trailers
- Expansion of park trails
- Improvements to park lighting, seating
- Addition of parking lots
- Improvements to sports fields/diamonds
- Expansions to beaches
- Expansion of Operations Department facilities
- Addition of washroom facilities
- Relocation and replacement of playground structures
- Signage improvements inside and outside the park

As per the stated goal of the *Future Directions Plan*, improvements have succeeded in maintaining and expanding the range of recreational uses, conserved portions of the park for passive open space uses, expanded the parks guest capacity, made the park easier to access, and resulted in a more attractive destination. Town Staff have learned over the past decade, and particularly in the last few years, that this approach would result in burdens on by-law enforcement, operational and maintenance costs, pressure on the remaining available shoreline land, and more expectations for a wider range of recreational services in the park.

Presently, the most pressing issue facing the park is the intensity of use that occurs during the summer months. As described by Town Staff in previous reports to Council (DSR-093-15, DSR-082-15, and related memorandums), growing attendance has resulted in congestion challenges associated with boat launch capacity and related parking supply, park occupancy being exceeded on sunny weekends, pressure on operations, fire/emergency access routes being blocked by vehicles, increased ticketing on surrounding residential streets, and concerns with on-street parking surrounding the park.

As the popularity of the park has grown rapidly among local residents and non-residents of Innisfil, the Town has become aware of the tremendous success of the Park as a destination for the region. Town Staff are aware of the growing pains associated with this level of attraction. Some from the community have expressed concerns that the park in its current form has reached its limit and cannot continue to meet both the needs of both regional and local guests. The IBPMP must be positioned to address this and a wide range of other concerns. A strong set of agreed upon principles is the first step in this process.

What We've Heard

The Town has received a high volume of feedback regarding the future vision IBP over the past several years, as a result of several correlated planning initiatives including the *Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, *Trails Master Plan*, and the *Our Place Official Plan*. An overview of feedback to date and relevant direction from supporting documents as it pertains to the *IBPMP* has been attached to the end of this report.

The attached feedback ranges from feedback on Staff, Council and resident expectations for parks and trails infrastructure generally throughout the Town, and specific feedback and recommendations on the challenges and needs of Innisfil Beach Park.

Feedback from this large dataset has directly informed the Master Plan model and established a set of proposed principles that are expressed within this report. Additional consultation as part of the IBP master planning process will confirm past feedback and identify preferred directions for the future.

Methodology

The IBPMP builds upon a wealth of data collected and compiled over the course of almost two decades of research, reporting, public engagement, data review and technical assessments. The following framework represents the methodology that will be used to prepare a Final Master Plan for Innisfil Beach Park.

1. Background Research

Staff began with a review of supporting background policy documents and existing master plans. Understanding the history of IBP and its changes over the years provides key insights into what has and has not worked as the space has evolved. Key documents listed below have provided a clear picture of the park's history and are based on extensive consultation and technical analysis:

- Culture, Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2002
- Innisfil Beach Park: *Future Directions Plan*, 2004
- Active Innisfil: Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2016
- Active Innisfil: Trails Master Plan, 2016
- Our Place Official Plan, 2018

Staff then conducted numerous site visits in all seasons to catalogue facilities, equipment and services. Visits show how the park is used as opposed to the ways the park are intended to be used and gives a snapshot of present-day activity patterns.

An examination of user feedback and operational strategies over the years was effective in guiding the consideration of potential future uses. The facility needs of the park and operating major issues have been documented within existing surveys, workshops, interviews and stakeholder working group data.

Direct engagement has been undertaken with the Operations team on several occasions and there are additional opportunities for detailed feedback at the design alternative preparation and preferred alternative stages of plan development.

2. Strategic Community Engagement

The extensive feedback received has revealed a large and relatively consistent assortment of opportunities and operational challenges, however the range of comments collected to-date has not yet offered a clear vision for the park. Instead, several potential directions have emerged based on what people like, dislike, and want to see. Feedback from locals and non-locals alike has ranged from excitement and satisfaction to frustration and displeasure at the current state of the park.

While the absence of a singular vision for the park at this stage presents a challenge in the development of a Master Plan, it also presents an exciting opportunity to create a vision that can address a wide range of user needs.

This report helps address this challenge by creating an initial set of supporting principles and a draft collective vision statement, based on all the feedback received to date and key directions from previous related planning exercises. From these principles and vision statements Staff can undertake detailed design work to prepare alternatives for resident, stakeholder and Council consideration with assurance that the initial direction is sound.

With the support of Council, additional focused consultation and information sharing events are proposed to occur over the summer to assist in creating design alternatives for the Park. It is intended that the initial Collective Vision Statement will guide initial park design alternatives which will be presented to the public and council, but be refined as feedback is heard on preferred alternatives. At the end of the selection of a preferred final vision statement, a Master Plan will be fully formed and present to Council.

3. Park Area Concept and Principles

Through an analysis of data collected and feedback received, Staff elected to organize park concepts within four areas, roughly splitting the park into four quadrants. Areas were delineated in a manner that encourage a more focused design response to reinforce successful uses and address persistent challenges. An overview of each Area is provided in the analysis section below.

A set of guiding principles and the initial visioning for each Area has been prepared as a starting point for Council consideration and a potential basis for the development of design alternatives. The initial vision for each area has been prepared, each descriptively telling a story of how the four areas could look, feel and function to future park patrons. These statements are not provided to be an unvarying vision to guide design alternatives, but intended to convey the sense of opportunity inherent in the visioning process and to suggest some of the formative uses being considered for each area.

With support from Council, the vision and principles identified in this report will be reflected within several Staff prepared design alternatives for public input on the preferred design.

4. Preferred Alternatives

A range of design alternatives will be prepared for each park Area to provide a constructive framework for public and stakeholder consultation on the IBP design. Feedback will be solicited to assist in selecting a preferred alternative, which will be presented to Council by Town Staff with an overview of feedback informing the selection.

The design alternatives will be prepared in consideration of the Council supported principles that are outlined in this report. The alternatives will implement the agreed principles through a possible range of changes to the park. The options will be prepared along a broad spectrum of relatively low to relatively high concentration of land uses, amenities, and costs. It is anticipated that this approach will enrich public discourse on how our premier park could better serve the community, and will permit meaningful feedback to be solicited at milestone consultation events this summer.

A potential preferred alternative will be presented to Council with an overview of supporting consultation feedback. Council will be asked to support the proposed alternative, which would trigger Staff to begin preparing a draft Master Plan.

5. Preparation of a Draft Master Plan

Upon selection of preferred alternatives, Staff will proceed with preparation of the Draft Master Plan. This plan will contain:

- A revised vision statement and supporting goals

- A detailed Planning Context that will bridge any gaps between receiving feedback and finalizing concepts towards a Final Master Plan. The Planning Context will balance public/stakeholder opinions with more technical feedback from Town Operations, Planning, and Capital Engineering.
- An overview of design alternatives with preferred concepts.
- A description of revised principles for each area.
- A list of potential area initiatives and description of next steps for professional cost assessment and phased implementation in support of the preferred option.
- A consideration of phasing, as prioritized by approved vision, time and cost.

Further memo updates to Council on opportunities, concerns, and changes will be provided as Staff undergo an iterative review process as the Draft Master Plan is prepared and refined, to keep Council updated on progress. When a proof of working concept is achieved, Staff will take steps to retain professional costing and design services to finalize the plan.

6. Final Master Plan

Following the refinement stage, technical studies completed, and receiving comment from all relevant stakeholders, the Final Draft Master Plan document would be finalized. The Final Master plan would then be sent to Council for a final decision.

ANALYSIS/CONSIDERATION:

Draft Collective Vision Statement

Building upon the area principles, working area concepts, and potential initiatives put forward in this report, Staff offer the following draft collective vision statement which reflects the overall long-term direction for the Park that will be further refined through community input:

All visitors will feel more welcome because the needs of residents and non-resident patrons will be more balanced. Resident priority amenities will be supported throughout the park where practicable. The effects of congestion, which affects the experience of all patrons, will be addressed proactively and boldly.

The Park can offer more when comprehensively planned for a better overall experience, not by only continuing to focus on the shortest walk between a parked car and our busiest assets. The park will be planned for visitors arriving by car, bike, taxi, rideshare, foot, wheelchair and from the water. The pedestrian mode will be elevated within the park and accessibility to the widest range of amenities made a first priority.

Our Park is a part of Our Town. The park will serve as a connection between Lake Simcoe and our Downtown Commercial area. Food service, entertainment, and cultural amenities associated with our Downtown will be drawn into the park to support the park a destination for surrounding lake communities. The park shall be better connected to the surrounding economic, tourism, and cultural destinations of Innisfil.

Places will be planned for their best use in both winter and summer. Winter season recreational and cultural programming in the Park will sustain a year round appeal for the park and provided a focused benefit our local users.

The Park is a place to participate in and witness the culture of Innisfil. Opportunities for arts, entertainment, and culture will be supported through supportive venues, public art initiatives, and high quality of architectural design.

The experience of connecting with water shall be diversified and enhanced at every opportunity. The park interface with Lake Simcoe should strive to be create a unique destination that complements surrounding regional attractions.

The natural splendor of the park will be enhanced. Natural buffers to the shoreline, creeks, and forests will be expanded throughout the park to ensure ecological processes can continue. The waters of Lake Simcoe and urban forest canopy will offer us shade, cooling, and relaxation.

Though this draft vision has been prepared in anticipation of some refinement through the alternative design and consultation process, its precepts reflect feedback received to date through extensive consultation outlined in the *What We've Heard Section* of this report and summarized in Attachment 1.

Park Area Concept

Staff have elected to employ a *parks within a park* approach to design, consult, and communicate planned improvements. This approach was considered in the 2004 *Future Directions Plan* for IBP whereby the park was split into areas with active uses in the west and more passive uses in the east. By splitting the park into several distinct areas during the planning phase, Town Staff hope to create a more varied and tailored park experience for a wider range of users.

Four Areas are proposed, splitting the park into four quadrants. Each Area is intended to have its own distinct character, yet be connected to each other in a manner that complements surrounding areas and contributes to the identity of the park as a whole.

Figure 1 IBPMP Area Map



- (1) Gateway Area**
- (2) Port of Innisfil Area**
- (3) Beaches Area**
- (4) Neighborhood Area**

Each area would be anchored by several primary uses and supported by a range of complementary activities. This approach is inspired by the “Power of 10” concept theorized and applied by *Projects for Public Spaces* for several *Our Place Official Plan* consultation initiatives. The goal of this approach is to cluster and layer smaller scaled activities that provoke the interest of visitors, draw people in, and result in a more memorable experience of the Park.

Area Overview

The following is an overview of each Area proposed by Town Staff. Each area contains a visioning statement intended to describe the experience of visiting. It is followed by a list proposed principles, potential initiatives, and an estimate of the magnitude of cost and phasing.

Costing symbols, provided here as estimates for discussion purposes, will require future professional assessment prior to Council approval of an established park direction. Estimated cost symbols, shown as ‘\$,’ represents initiatives costing less than \$20,000 as (\$), less than \$100,000 as (\$\$), and less than \$500,000 as (\$\$\$), and more than \$500,000 as (\$\$\$\$).

Potential phasing or timing for these initiatives has been estimated for the purposes of initiating conversation through this report and will be fully examined at a future date, once direction from Council has been established on a preferred design. ‘Short’ term initiatives are estimated as being accomplished within 1-3 years, ‘Medium’ term within 3-10 years, and ‘Long’ term within 10-20 years.

With the support of Council for the proposed principles, Staff will prepare a set of alternatives for future consideration which can all serve to implement the principles.

1. Gateway Area

The Gateway Area was created to create a distinctive entranceway from the Downtown Commercial area to our premier park. The Gateway Area is the other half of the planned land use changes south of Innisfil Beach Road. As the historic primary entrance to the park, the Gateway will be the focus for big moves to address traffic congestion issues coming from Innisfil Beach Road. An opportunity exists to explore greater intensity of land uses within the park in response to planned Downtown Commercial area densities, in concert with a wider range of arts, culture, and entertainment opportunities to compete with the Beaches Area. Given the importance of the Gateway as a connection between the economic center of Alcona’s Downtown and the Lake Simcoe shoreline, the Gateway Area lands will benefit in a more urban park character to leverage economic benefits of the surrounding destinations and compliment the potential for greater intensity of use along the shoreline.

The Gateway stretches from 25 Sideroad to the eastern baseball diamond along Innisfil Beach Road, from Innisfil Beach Road north to Bon Secours Creek. Currently, the Gateway consists of the Innisfil Fire Station 1, Toboggan Hill, a parking lot, two baseball diamonds and a paved walkway.

The path from Downtown to the shoreline is tedious and noisy due to traffic and few activities. The proposed principles embrace the linear quality of the Gateway by considering a series of parkettes and courtyards, and pedestrian connections with opportunities to facilitate cultural programming (i.e. musical performance, art exhibits, pedestrian plaza) tied together by a combination of landscaped areas and compatible retail opportunities. Implementing a recommendation from the 2004 *Future Directions Plan*, the existing roadway is altered to create

a new exit on 25 Sideroad at the northwest portion of the park. The leading strategy to address congestion problems is to consider converting the road into a multi-lane one-way roadway with entrance at Innisfil Beach Road and exiting at the northwest corner along 25 Sideroad.

1.1. A Potential Vision for the Gateway Area

Passing 25 Sideroad, leaving the bustle of the Downtown, the scale of development shrinks as a wide promenade leads towards the lake. Along Innisfil Beach Road low-rise terraced balconies interspersed with awnings and residents watching the activity below frame the gateway to the park. Pop up storefronts, kiosks, retail buildings, and mixed use structures may be considered here, constructed sensitively to the surrounding park views, and would spill onto the sidewalks with patrons emerging and transitioning in and out of the park. Connections to the surrounding Areas, in the form of pedestrian only laneways and natural colonnades between structures would lead to small parkettes and open meadows along the re-wilded Bon Secours creek. These areas are built like outdoor rooms, each having its own distinct quality and purpose. Brightly colored signs direct to the Neighborhood, Beaches, and Port of Innisfil Areas. One path away from the street leads a floral gardens, then to a public art exhibit, crosses the creek, and concludes at a glass pavilion opening to a wide open field, where a wedding is being setting up for the following morning. The hum of the Beaches and BARBEQUE areas can still be heard and smelled as the sun begins setting.

1.2. Gateway Area Principles

- a) Explore a range of potential built forms for of private commercial, residential, and community space uses on both sides of Innisfil Beach Road, compatible with and transitioning to neighboring intensified Downtown Commercial area designation uses and future natural form within Innisfil Beach Park. Staff will examine the possible sale of public lands and leasing models on public lands for private enterprise within and adjacent to the park, where doing so may benefit the broader vision for the park and the Town.
- b) Buildings proposed within and adjacent the park shall be constructed in a manner sympathetic to the park, address the park, and maintain a permeable and porous edge to the park. Shadow impacts, projecting wind effects, and disturbances to the general human scale focus of the park shall be a consideration of all built developments. All public and private structures should be designed to maximize the feel, experience and character of 100% public ownership (i.e. maximize public space, permeable first floor design, seamless integration with supporting public amenities).
- c) Focus upon opportunities for entertainment, arts and cultural engagement to assist in transitioning between the Downtown Commercial area and more central areas of Innisfil Beach Park.
- d) Employ a high visual amenity, quality landscape design, and compatible attractions along the Gateway to draw visitors to and from the Downtown Commercial area and attractions within the park. Though functioning as a channel for visitors, the Gateway itself should be understood as a convenient destination for users walking into the park from Innisfil Beach Road.
- e) Current in-park parking infrastructure in this area is limited but still situated prominently along the gateway. Over time, parking should be deemphasized inside the park, moved to less prominent areas, and relocated to areas outside the park and along the Innisfil Beach Road Downtown Commercial area. To support vehicular access into the park,

functional alternatives such as limited and use-specific in park parking, drop off areas, rideshare infrastructure, and accessibility parking will be prioritized. All relocation of parking areas must be only undertaken in concert with parking replacement in other convenient locations.

- f) Use a range of high quality soft and hard landscape treatments to activate new smaller passive use opportunities between the Gateway Area and the Neighborhood Area to buffer uses and provide a direct competitor to passive shoreline recreation needs.
- g) Recreate Innisfil Beach Road, east of 25 Sideroad, to be a more energetic and pedestrian friendly roadway with more frequent and convenient opportunities to cross to the future Downtown Commercial areas on the south side.
- h) Consider appropriate climate change adaptation strategies within the Gateway and all other Areas for anticipated effects of climate change. This may include use of high-albedo surfaces, green roofs, cooling areas, drinking water fountains, rain gardens, tree canopy and buffers, and LID (permeable surfaces, bioretention, etc.), to combat the heat island effect associated with urban areas.
- i) Consider a wide range of opportunities for private partnerships, land lease revenues, and POPS (privately operated public spaces) for land within and adjacent the park.
- j) Relocate existing baseball diamonds in concert with planned facility replacement to minimize disruptions to users.
- k) The Gateway Area will function to direct users arriving from car or on foot to other Areas as they travel east. Park signage, which will be a component of every Area, must be a focus in the Gateway.
- l) Expand and introduce naturalized buffer vegetation along Bon Secours Creek corridor to support wildlife in the park, buffer incompatible uses, and create comfortable and sustainable green space for visitors.
- m) Create more green connections like fingers over Bon Secours Creek and Innisfil Beach Road to better connect locals south of the park to the Neighborhood Area
- n) At every step, consider interim or phased options to permit lighter, quicker, and cheaper implementation of Gateway Area principles, to enhance park experience in early stages and to support the development of surrounding Downtown Commercial area lands.
- o) Integrate operational infrastructure considerations, such as maintenance paths, vehicle turning, vehicular/pedestrian conflicts, in all designs.

1.3. Potential Initiatives for Consideration

Potential Initiative	Cost Estimate	Timeframe Estimate
Sale/Leasing land for private food and shopping destinations	\$ (with associated revenue)	Medium
Innisfil Beach Road Diet Transformation	\$\$\$\$	Medium
Ornamental Gardens/Parkettes	\$\$\$	Medium
Plaza/Performance Space	\$\$	Medium
Public Art Installations	\$\$	Medium
Relocation of Baseball Diamonds	\$\$	Medium
Guidelines for retail adjacent public open space	\$	Short
Art Summerhouse	\$\$	Short
Bon Secours Creek Buffer Plantings	\$\$	Short
Park Gateway Art Feature	\$\$\$	Short
Raising Toboggan Hill	\$\$	Short

Self-guided tour signs and audio	\$	Short
Retail pop-up, kiosk, mixed use design standards	\$\$	Short

2. Port of Innisfil Area

The Port of Innisfil Area was conceived in response to a growing group of lake travelers within and outside the municipality and reoccurring feedback that the Park needed additional food and retail opportunities. The application of *Our Place* placemaking principles in this area could transform the park’s least attractive beach area by creating a cluster of shopping opportunities and attractive public spaces intended to draw pedestrians to and from surrounding lake communities, the Downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods.

2.1. A Potential Vision for the Port of Innisfil Area

The Port of Innisfil Area marks the end of Innisfil Beach Road, where the activity of the storefronts meets the shoreline. Visitors who arrived on foot can stock up the cooler, replace the umbrella that blew away last visit, charge your phone, and mingle until friends arrive and walk up the boardwalk to the Beaches. Information kiosks, shops and kiosks selling summer necessities and renting out equipment, and plenty of seats under shade fill out this Area. Families arriving from the drop off area to the north walk down to find a seat on the patio and enjoy snacks from a local food truck. Smells of a nearby restaurants and BARBEQUE’s further up the coast are carried in the air. On the water a wide, brightly colored floating dock gives the illusion of a second beach over the Lake and let people experience the water in a new way. Over the water, hundreds of pleasure boats arrive each day from around Lake Simcoe, with visitors stopping for food, shopping, major Town events, and to enjoy the night life. A navigable canal could lead directly into the park, bringing lake travelers right into to the action of the Port of Innisfil and closer to the Downtown.

2.2. Port of Innisfil Area Principles

- a) The Port of Innisfil shall become the park’s second major gateway, a lake oriented destination designed to receive visitors who arrive by water and draw them into the park and Downtown area. As a key destination in itself and gateway to the park and Downtown Alcona, consideration shall be made for the potential for an iconic signifying landmark visible from the lake and the view shed terminus from Innisfil Beach Road.
- b) Buildings proposed within and adjacent the park shall be constructed in a manner sympathetic to the park, address the park, and maintain a permeable and porous edge to the park. Shadow impacts, projecting wind effects, and disturbances to the general human scale focus of the park shall be a consideration of all built developments. All public and private structures should be designed to maximize the feel, experience and character of public ownership or private service of public realm (.ie. maximize public space, permeable first floor design, seamless integration with supporting public amenities).
- c) With the intensity of use being considered easing vehicular congestion and prioritizing a safe and intuitive pedestrian movement must be a top priority. The plan shall consider every measure to ensure that the pedestrian experience is safe, enjoyable, and accessible.
- d) Uses shall be clustered to support the Port of Innisfil experience (e.g. power of 10)
- e) Multi-use public space shall be prioritized to readily convert into small event spaces and facilitate convenient event planning options (ex. pop-up beer garden).

- f) The Port of Innisfil should be oriented as to the lake wherever possible, providing numerous and unique means to play and interact with the water and view Lake Simcoe. Key water based destination features, such as a potential marina dock system, canal, and shoreline boardwalk features, should be the focus of this area and connect the Hub to surrounding park Areas.
- g) Consider the widest range of opportunities for private partnerships, land lease revenues, and POPS (privately operated public spaces) for the Port of Innisfil Area. Novel ownership, lease, rental arrangements should be explored to allow for short medium and long term opportunities to be captured.
- h) Employ strategies to integrate and conceal above ground municipal infrastructure (ex. fresh water pump station) with unified building materials, landscaping, and other types of screening.
- i) Emphasize the Town's environmental commitment by re-wilding shoreline areas not adjacent the built up Port of Innisfil with native vegetated buffers, offset construction and ongoing use user disturbances.
- j) Consider interim or phased options to permit Lighter, Quicker, and Cheaper implementation of Port of Innisfil principles, to enhance park experience in early stages and to support the development of surrounding Downtown Commercial area lands.
- k) Reclaiming prime swimming areas through shoreline naturalization improvements to improve water quality. The concrete pier has been identified as a determinant of water pollution on the south beach.
- l) Support the provision of rental equipment to diversify Lake Simcoe experience for visitors.
- m) Ensure a range of healthy food and drink options are provided at all stages of the parks development.
- n) Integrate operational infrastructure considerations, such as maintenance paths, vehicle turning, vehicular/pedestrian conflicts.
- o) Exploring potential locations for Operations Staff facility, including adaptive reuse of structures within the park, new facilities.

2.3. Potential Initiatives for Consideration:

Potential Initiative	Cost Estimate	Timeframe Estimate
Canal/Marina Dock System	\$\$\$\$\$	Long
Linear marketplace/plaza feature sandwiched between beach and park roadway	\$\$\$	Medium
Floating dock, replacing the environmentally detrimental concrete dock structure, extends the boardwalk over the Lake	\$\$\$\$	Medium
Removal of the existing concrete dock and restoration of the south beach	\$\$\$	Medium
Town leased restaurant space with lakefront patio	\$\$\$\$\$	Medium
Town leased removable, seasonal retail kiosks;	\$\$	Medium
Small, unobtrusive water feature (ex. shallow wading pool)	\$\$	Medium
Floating dock, marina system	\$\$\$\$	Medium
Signifying Landmark for the Port of Innisfil and IBP	\$\$\$	Medium
Relocation of Operations Facility	\$\$\$	Medium
Central boardwalk leading north along the shoreline	\$\$	Short
Information kiosks containing maps, event schedules	\$	Short
Shade sails and cooling stations	\$\$	Short
Informal seating with moveable chairs	\$	Short
Shoreline buffer restoration	\$\$	Short

Public Art	\$\$	Short
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3. Beaches Area

The Beaches Area was conceived to recognize the level of beach and barbeque activities identified by residents and staff members. The Beaches Area extends from Lake Simcoe back to the current day parking lots C, D, and E. The current state of the Beaches is dominated by car and boat trailer parking lots that compete with the park's busiest family-oriented picnicking and BARBEQUE areas. The challenge for the Beaches Area, as it was anticipated in the 2004 *Future Directions Plan*, is striking a balance between the convenience of the automobile and the benefits of preserving our most valuable shoreline parkland. The Plan proposes to enhance the affordable, family-oriented experiences which have made this park so popular, and to address the issue of congestion boldly by shifting the way residents arrive at the park.

3.1. A Potential Vision for the Beaches Area

The hum of car and truck traffic at the launch is gone, but the Beaches are still the center of activity on hot summer days. Families could arrive at the kiss and ride stop and unload conveniently within a few minute walk from the beach. The sand extends back from the shoreline nearly twice as far as it once did, intersected by a wide multi use path leading north from the Port of Innisfil up to the 'Residents Beach' near Roberts Road. Tall trees would break up the expanse of beach, creating comfortable spaces that make it easier to watch for children. A floating dock, wide enough for sun bathers and walkers to share comfortably floats on Lake Simcoe, extending nearly the length of the beach and serves to smooth the water. Boaters pull up to the dock to visit for the afternoon, come downtown for dinner, or to visit one of the many concerts and festivals held at the park over the summer. In the evenings, park walking and the fire pits become the focus of activity and can be seen distantly illuminating the park from the water in summer or a snowmobile in winter.

3.2. Beaches Area Principles

- a) Over the long-term, parking facilities will be relocated further away from the shoreline including the possibility of entirely relocating public parking areas to outside the park. Convenient vehicular access will continue to be permitted in the long term, but in the form of limited use-specific parking areas, kiss and ride areas, ridesharing and taxi drop off, shuttle, and accessibility parking. All relocation of parking areas must be only undertaken in concert with parking replacement at other nearby locations
- b) Parking management strategies will be considered, including monitoring technologies and electronic signage to aid with the management of parking, park occupancy, and revenues.
- c) Boat access within the park will shift towards a day trip destination rather than departure point for lake travelers throughout the region. The long term viability of launch facilities within the park will be re-examined, up to and including relocation of the launch area to an alternate location(s) not within the park, over the long term. Replacement of launch facilities must be only undertaken in concert with facility replacements and enhancements outside of Innisfil Beach Park. The Road Ends program has been identified as a unique well-suited option to accommodate the current launch needs over the medium and long term.
- d) Unique water oriented key initiatives, including a marina, in-land navigable canal, and systems of floating docks will be explored as a means to enliven the experience of visiting the water and arrive from the water.

- e) Emphasize the Town’s environmental commitment by re-wilding shoreline areas not adjacent the built up Port of Innisfil with native vegetated buffers, offset construction and ongoing use user disturbances.
- f) Ease barbecue, picnicking, and beach user congestion in the Beaches Area by expanding and legitimizing those areas. Space freed by removal of parking areas will be used to address congestion associated the park’s most popular recreation uses, accommodate additional supporting facilities.
- g) The beach experience shall be improved for all users, with particular emphasis on safety of children, accessibility for persons with disabilities, greater shade and cooling opportunities, and strategies to reduce congestion.
- h) Existing facilities, where condition permits, shall be considered for upgrades to bring their appearance and function in line with the anticipated level of use for the park.
- i) Opportunities to expand the beach amenity without resorting to conversion of natural shoreline to beach shall be explored. This could include deepening the beaches, creating residents only beach areas, and creating offshore attractions and swim protection areas through floating dock/pier designs.
- j) The plan shall be consider opportunities for year round enjoyment in all Areas, but with a particular emphasis on very low winter activity spaces such as the Beaches and Neighborhood Areas. Consideration shall be made for better use of underutilized open spaces like the BARBEQUE area and beaches during less busy weekdays. This could entail identification of temporary uses, large event uses, and creative place making initiatives.
- k) Identification of practical by-law and emergency service infrastructure within the Beaches Area. This may take the form of a compact base of operations to support needed by-law and law enforcement personnel and dedicated access routes for emergency vehicles to known conflict areas.

3.3. Potential Initiatives for Consideration

Potential Initiative	Cost Estimate	Timeframe Estimate
Parking lot relocation	\$\$\$	Long
Dock system	\$\$\$\$\$	Medium
Kiss and ride facilities on existing asphalt	\$\$	Medium
Multi-Use Trail Expansion	\$\$\$	Medium
Shade sails and cooling stations	\$\$\$	Medium
Enforcement Infrastructure	\$\$	Medium
Beach expansion	\$\$	Short
Outdoor Gym	\$\$\$	Short
Washroom/Changing Room	\$\$\$\$\$	Short
Interim Parking Lot Management Technologies	\$\$	Short
Beach shade sails	\$\$	Short
Winter Warming Huts	\$	Short
Art/Retail Parkette Installations	\$	Short
Shoreline and Creek Buffer Restoration	\$\$\$	Short

4. Neighborhood Area

The Neighborhood Area was conceived in recognition of the local users who see IBP as a neighborhood park. The Neighborhood Area is north of the Bon Secours Creek and extends west from the Beaches Area to 25 Sideroad. The current Neighborhood Area is predominantly open space, with several sports fields and tennis courts, a washroom, a gazebo, a classroom

building, and the Water Treatment Plant. The lands now called the Neighborhood Area, was designated for active uses in 2004 *Future Directions Plan*, meaning use for outdoor sports. The character of the Neighborhood Area is to shift this area to meet the needs of local users through community oriented facilities, such as a community hub facility for local events, classes, socializing; community gardens; outdoor food preparation area; seedling greenhouse; and dog-park. These lands will require careful design to separate Beaches Area users and to maintain the quiet and secluded character needed for a neighborhood park feel. Larger changes for this area include consideration for an exit point for the park road and potential intensification of use along 25 Sideroad. If supported, these changes must be managed sensitively to preserve the intimacy of a neighborhood park experience.

4.1. A Potential Vision for the Neighborhood Area

The Neighborhood Area is a five minute walk away for over six hundred households on the streets surrounding the park. Transitioning from the private backyards that currently front onto the Park, the Neighborhood Area is a place oriented towards sustaining our community connections. Community facilities such as gardens, outdoor kitchen space, and picnicking areas would create opportunities for locals to gather, hold events, and share experiences. New paths could lead in and out of the park area, from Alderslea and Lebanon, from Holy Cross and north to Goodfellow Public School, and further north to the entrances of future nature trails. This place would feel like a neighborhood park within a park, separated from intensity of the Beaches and Gateway Areas.

4.2. Neighborhood Area Principles

- a) Explore a range of potential built forms for private residential and community space north of the Water Treatment Plant which are compatible with and transitioning to neighboring surrounding residential areas and Neighborhood Area principles within the park. Staff will examine the possible sale of public lands for residential use in this area, where doing so may benefit the broader vision for the park and the Town and continue to meet the other Neighborhood Area principles.
- b) Buildings proposed within and adjacent the park shall be constructed in a manner sympathetic to the park, address the park, and maintain a permeable and porous edge to the park. Shadow impacts, projecting wind effects, and disturbances to the general human scale focus of the park shall be a consideration of all built developments. All public and private structures should be designed to maximize the feel, experience and character of public ownership (i.e. maximize public space, permeable first floor design, seamless integration with supporting public amenities).
- c) Over the medium-term, parking facilities located away from the shoreline may be retained as in-park parking for the purposes of local focused events. All relocation of parking areas must be only undertaken in concert with parking replacement in other convenient locations.
- d) The Neighborhoods area will consider smaller scale community supportive parking opportunities be retained, with the majority of uses accessible by foot alone to encourage and preserve local use.
- e) Existing natural areas are to be expanded, especially around the borders of the area, with native vegetation that can provide cooling shade and habitat to create a buffer between surrounding neighborhoods and to allow wildlife to continue to thrive in the park.

- f) A reduction and consolidation of fields for more drop-in style use will be considered. Removal of fields is to be undertaken in concert with planned facility replacements to minimize disruptions to users.
- g) Community facilities, parking, and buffers shall be located and strategies explored to discourage Beaches Area uses from spilling into Neighborhood Area.
- h) Integrate small scale uses compatible with a Neighborhood Park as defined by the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, such as small play structures, large fire pit reserved for community events, and indoor/outdoor classroom.
- i) Examine adaptive reuse, renovation and expansion to existing structures to appropriately reflect planned level of use.
- j) The impact of the one-way multi-lane road configuration must be mitigated as it passes through this area. Numerous routing options shall be considered to minimize disruption to pathways in and out of the park, accessibility, noise, and the intended Neighborhood Area character.
- k) The plan shall consider expanding existing multi-use trail infrastructure to create a loop system. This loop shall connect the Neighborhood Area.

4.3. Potential Initiatives for Consideration

Potential Initiative	Cost Estimate	Timeframe Estimate
Washroom Renovation	\$\$\$	Medium
Classroom Building Renovation/Outdoor Expansion	\$\$\$	Medium
Food Preparation Area and Oven	\$	Medium
Vegetation Buffer Plantings	\$\$	Short
Off-Leash Dog Park	\$\$	Short
Community Garden	\$	Short
Seedling Greenhouse	\$\$	Short

TIMELINE:

May 22, 2018

- Vision and Principles Staff Report provided for Council consideration.

June and July

- Targeted stakeholder discussion, smaller scale in park events for information sharing to take place.

August Week 1

- Community presentation of park designs and preferred alternative consultation.

September Week 1

- Report to Council on preferred alternative and consultation overview.

September

- Town Staff undertake refinement to preferred alternative.
- Professional services requested to support costing and phasing considerations.
- A memo will be prepared to update Council on progress.

October

- Substantive draft presented to Council for final consideration of draft IBPMP.

November

- Final Master Plan brought to Council for approval

OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES:

Council has the option to approve the recommendations of this report, as put forward by Planning Staff, or to request that Staff make additional modifications.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION:

Council has already approved funding in the amount of \$40,000 as part of the 2018 Capital budget approved for the IBPMP. These funds are earmarked for the development of the Master Plan, and are being used by Town Staff in the preparation of this report, pending consultation, and future reports.

In consideration of potential initiatives outlined in this report, alternative revenue streams will be needed to realize the vision for the park. Alternative revenue streams will be a focus of the coming design stage to examine where those opportunities exist and will be communicated in a future report.

Additionally, detailed costing for potential initiatives will be outlined in greater detail in a future report, once feedback on a preferred alternative has been undertaken, to reduce the cost and complexity of detailed costing services.

CONCLUSION:

The purpose of this report is to provide information about the development of the Innisfil Beach Park Master Plan. Ongoing direction from Council, combined with feedback received to date will result in a more effective Innisfil Beach Park Master Plan.

Recommendations from this report will lead to development of park design alternatives which will form the basis of public consultation and the selection of a preferred alternative.

The proposed recommendations outline actions of Staff to continue work on the Innisfil Beach Park with confidence the proposed direction is sound.

PREPARED BY:

Gaelen Pierce, Planner

APPROVED BY:

Tim Cane, Manager of Land Use Planning

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment #1 What We've Heard (Summary of Feedback to Date)
- Attachment #2 Our Place Consultation Overview Excerpt
- Attachment #3 (2004) Innisfil Beach Park: Future Direction Plan
([https://innisfil.ca/getFileByName/2019.05.22%20DSR-051-19%20Attachment%204%202004%20Future%20Directions%20Plan%20\(ID%20415394\).pdf](https://innisfil.ca/getFileByName/2019.05.22%20DSR-051-19%20Attachment%204%202004%20Future%20Directions%20Plan%20(ID%20415394).pdf))