

HAMILTON WEST HARBOUR WATERFRONT RECREATION MASTER PLAN



April 14, 2010

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INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

The aim of the West Hamilton Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan is to define and clarify planning design guidelines that will guide and shape development of the buildings and landscapes of the west harbour for the foreseeable future. The Master Plan establishes a waterfront vision which builds upon the City of Hamilton's *Setting Sail* policies as well as the stakeholder and public input received during this master planning process.

A Master Plan is a living document that clarifies planning and design direction and demonstrates the manner in which future development may unfold. These are illustrated with design concepts and relevant examples or precedents. However, the key elements are the underlying principles and guidelines. Interpretation of the guidelines and design concepts can and will evolve. What should remain constant is a commitment to planning and design excellence through ongoing public involvement and peer review.

PLANNING PROCESS

The West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan was initiated in 2005, following Council's adoption of the *Setting Sail Secondary Plan* for the West Harbour.

While *Setting Sail* identifies a number of policies and planning principles, which were to be followed during the development of the West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan, the Hamilton community also helped create the vision.

This document followed a coordinated planning process, whereby land use and infrastructure components were developed together to ensure balance between ecological, social and economical aspects.

As the landowner, the City of Hamilton must ensure that the West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan is appropriate for all residents and showcase high quality architecture and a progressive environmental image to visitors, while recognizing the areas industrial past.

In 2000, The Hamilton Port Authority conveyed the bulk of Piers 1,2 and 5-8 to the City. With this transfer, the City inherited a number of leases on the land. The City recognizes the variety of recreational boating opportunities leaseholders provide in the West Harbour; however, they were approved without an overall planning framework to guide their land use, architecture and servicing requirements. With

implementation of this plan, there will be additional leaseholders on the waterfront offering added recreation opportunities for residents of Hamilton along with guidelines as to how the area should evolve.

Throughout the process there were a number of significant issues that required resolution, including the amount and location of boat storage, flood elevation requirements and the general public's enjoyment of the waterfront, while recognizing the need for privacy and security for boaters. This plan attempts to resolve these matters while ensuring the West Harbour is an attractive and enjoyable environment for all residents throughout the year.

This document contains policies and principles relating to design guidelines, architecture, waterfront precincts, and implementation to ensure that public and privately funded initiatives develop in a fashion that highlight the areas heritage, while creating a vibrant and contemporary place within the West Harbour. The organic nature of historical development in the area has created a quirky and interesting enclave. This plan looks to knit these elements together to increase inclusivity for all users and help clarify where people can go and to create new public amenities.

The West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan vision will be implemented over a number of years

The West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan consists of four parts

- Part 1 - Background Information
- Part 2 - West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan (this document)
- Part 3 - Project File Report
- Part 4 - Consultation

Setting Sail

Secondary Plan for West Harbour



Planning and Economic Development Department



THE SITE

One of the best harbours in Ontario, Hamilton's West Harbour is establishing itself as a prime waterfront destination. Bayfront Park and Pier 4 Parks effectively have received local, provincial, national and international recognition, including the 1994 Bay Area Restoration Council Implementation Award, the Ontario Parks Association Award of Recognition, the 1995 Elaine Burke Community Recognition Award, and the 1995 Excellence on the Waterfront Honour Award - Waterfront Centre.

Restored natural and cultural features, new trails and recreational users have added to the success of the West Harbour waterfront. This trail connects with other successful trails reaching major waterfront attractions such as the HMCS Haida, the Discovery Centre, Dundurn Castle, Cootes Paradise and the Royal Botanical Gardens.

The Harbour West Waterfront project site is located within the North End neighbourhood. It is bounded by:

- The rail lines to the West
- Guise and Bay Streets to the South
- Pier 8 to the East

Adjoining Uses

Established neighbourhoods to the south of the project site are primarily single family and semi-detached housing forms.

Future development to the east of the project site on Pier 8 will follow the City of Hamilton's 2005 West Harbour Secondary Plan: *Setting Sail* with higher density built form that includes mixed use, commercial, and employment land uses.

Access

Several existing streets serve the project site. Future transit service expansion, and active transportation facilities are planned to accommodate the future growth of the waterfront.

Transit

Currently, the site is serviced by HSR bus lines and a free seasonal waterfront shuttle during the warmer months. A future rapid transit route will service the waterfront in a manner to be determined.

Waterfront Trail

The West Harbour Waterfront is part of the Lake Ontario WaterFront Trail Network and the Trans Canada Trail.

Environmental Conditions

Topography

Located north of the Niagara Escarpment, the project site is at the foot of a steep embankment and slopes towards the water.



A large percentage of the Hamilton West Harbour study area is composed of harbour infilling.

Hydrology

The West Harbour Waterfront is located within the Spencer Creek watershed, within Lake Ontario. No surface water features exist within the project site, except for Hamilton Harbour.



HARBOUR WEST CONCEPT PLAN

Working together with the Waterfront Trust and continuing upon their work, the West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan is to enhance and balance the recreational, ecological and marine functions of the West Harbour. Many of the approved recommendations, including retaining the existing shoreline configuration where possible, the reuse of existing buildings and permitting boat clubs to continue operations in their existing facilities stems from the work previously done by the Hamilton Waterfront Trust

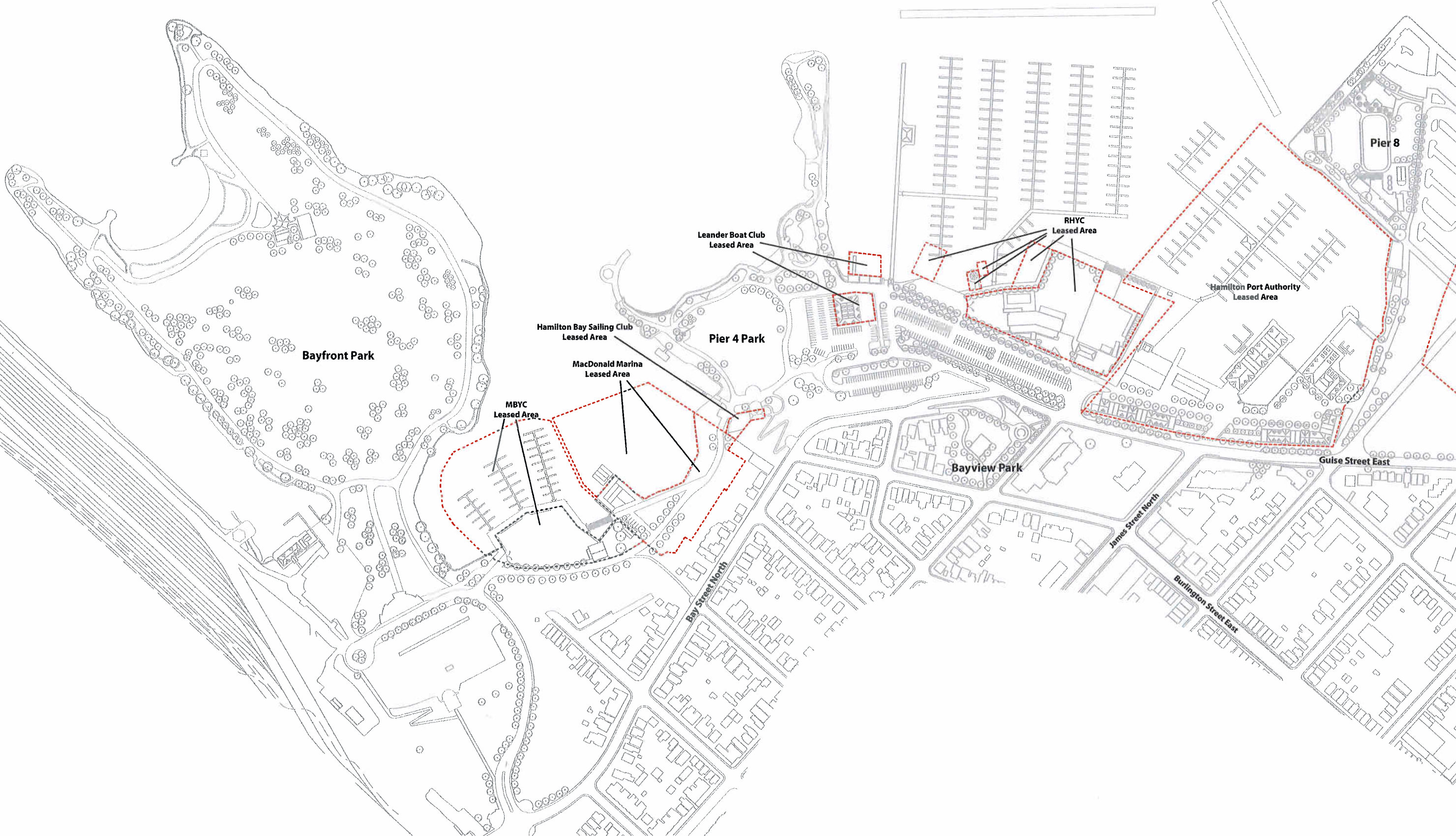


right: Harbour West Concept Plan prepared by Hamilton Waterfront Trust January 2010

Harbour West Concept Plan

plan not to scale
January 2010

EXISTING LEASEHOLD BOUNDARIES



KEY IDEAS

Public Access along Water's Edge

Historically, the West Hamilton Harbour's water's edge has been comprised of a variety of public and private uses, largely inaccessible and of little interest to the general public. Access was restricted or intermittent, often for reasons of safety and security. In recent years however, newly reclaimed open space is now a popular City and regional destination. Along with this evolution of the West Harbour, the desire for continuous public access has grown and become the policy directive of both the City and the Waterfront Trust. To this end, this Master Plan illustrates the principle of a continuous public edge to the waterfront. In some situations, limited restrictions to accommodate special activities such as operation of the Marine Police Unit, sailing club regattas or seasonal marine launching activity are acknowledged. However, while the precise logistics of temporary closures or restrictions will evolve and change, the principle of continuous public access to the water's edge is a key premise of the master plan concept.

Multiple Waterfront Trail

The Waterfront Trail is the continuous recreational link throughout the City's waterfront and is essentially the backbone of West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan. The trail accommodates all types of users from pedestrians to cyclists, in-line skaters and even the recreational trolley. While the central route follows the water's edge, conditions for free movement will be affected by the type (pedestrians, cyclists, in-line skaters, etc.) and the number of users on a given day. For this reason, opportunities for minor diversions or route choice are provided in combinations of boardwalks, off-road trails and multi-use plazas or gathering spaces. Again, some management of users will be required, but the layered movement pattern should largely be self-governing.

Vibrant and Active Public Spaces

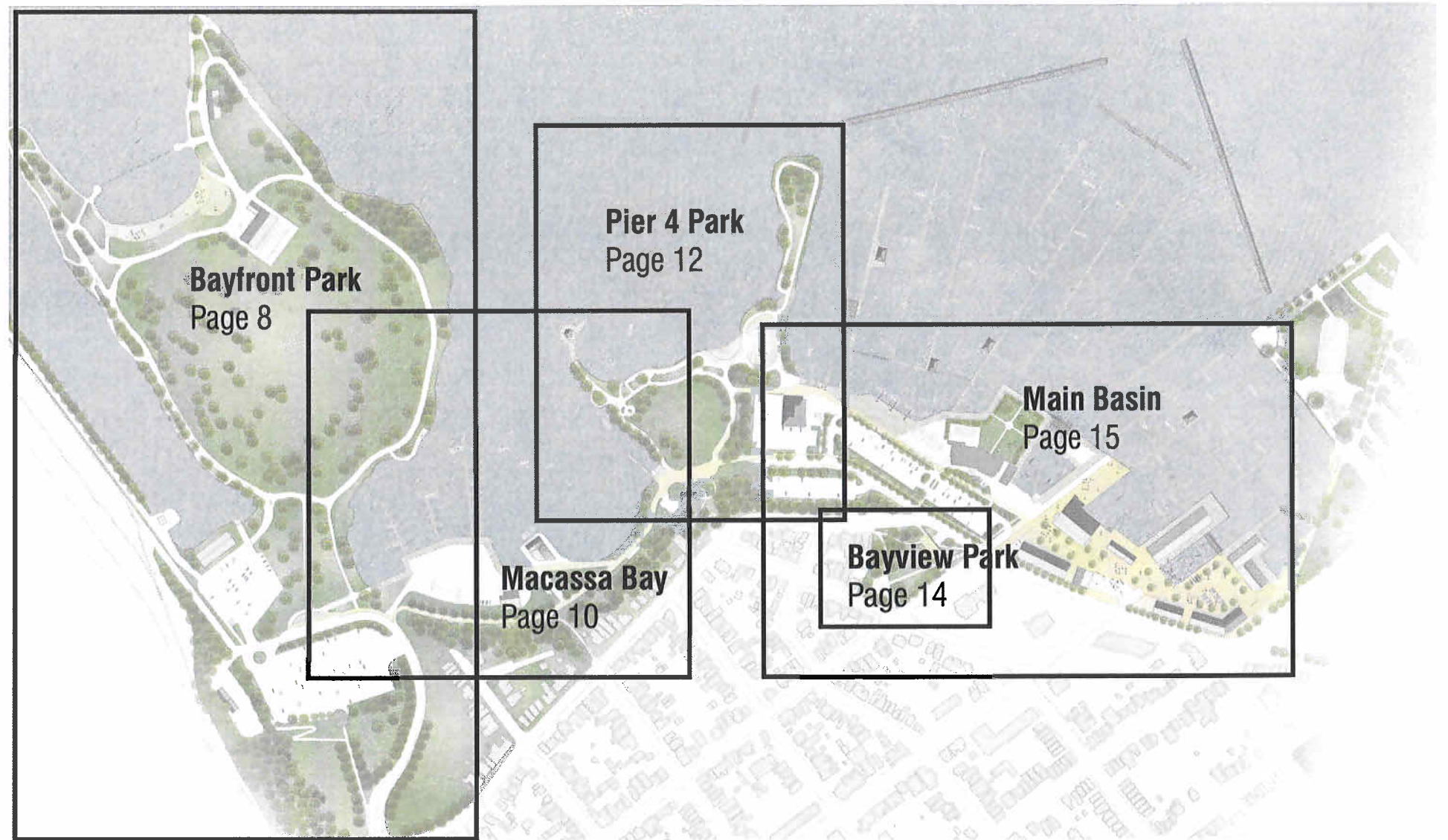
Vibrant and active place making in Hamilton West Harbour is about the design of spaces, the experiences they make possible and the consequences they have on users. To foster and facilitate these activities, the public realm must be both flexible and populated. Key among these are the principle gathering spaces such as the foot of James Street. Here, stairs become seating, a precinct becomes a temporary stage, or the plaza is transformed into a market to accommodate an event such as a seasonal public art or marine display. These types of spaces need to be open and flexible to accommodate a wide range of uses, while comfortable and complete when not in programmed use. Buildings that surround or support the spaces should shelter or temper the open spaces with public-related frontages and uses that spill into and activate the public realm. A high degree of transparency is also important so that when cooler or inclement weather draw people indoors, there is still a strong link with the exterior.

Coherence, Consistency and Place

In order to establish a coherent waterfront precinct, the landscapes, public spaces and architecture should be consistent with the language or family of building and landscape types that define Hamilton's West Harbour. While existing architecture styles vary, the form and materials of the memorable or iconic buildings are simple industrial sheds with pitched roofs and practical metal finishes. The landscapes and public spaces are generally either of the more recently constructed traditional parks or working waterfront spaces and piers. The buildings and landscapes are bordered by a natural, vegetated bluff, which in turn is edged by the adjoining residential neighbourhoods to the south and east. Whereas the urban fabric of the city is ordered, the waterfront precinct is more idiosyncratic, shaped by the evolution of the water's edge. The principle of recognizing and strengthening these key thematic building blocks should be the basis for future building and landscape design with the intent of ensuring that new development is rooted in and reflects this unique place.



WATERFRONT PRECINCTS



BAYFRONT PARK

Overview

Development of Bayfront Park in the Hamilton's North End has made a substantial improvement in public access and to the enjoyment of Hamilton's civic harbourfront lands. What began as a project to remediate a large industrial landfill site resulted in the transformation of this site into a versatile public green space. Since its opening in the summer of 1993, it has become one of the City's most popular parks.

Proposed Fountain / Public Art

Inviting people into the park would be a new fountain and public art located just north of the parking lot. Envisioned as an interactive water feature that would animate the space and draw people into Bayfront Park, the water feature and public art would also be a node and start to an easterly walk along the West Harbour or westerly towards Cootes Paradise. Active trail users could also use the fountain as a cooling station.

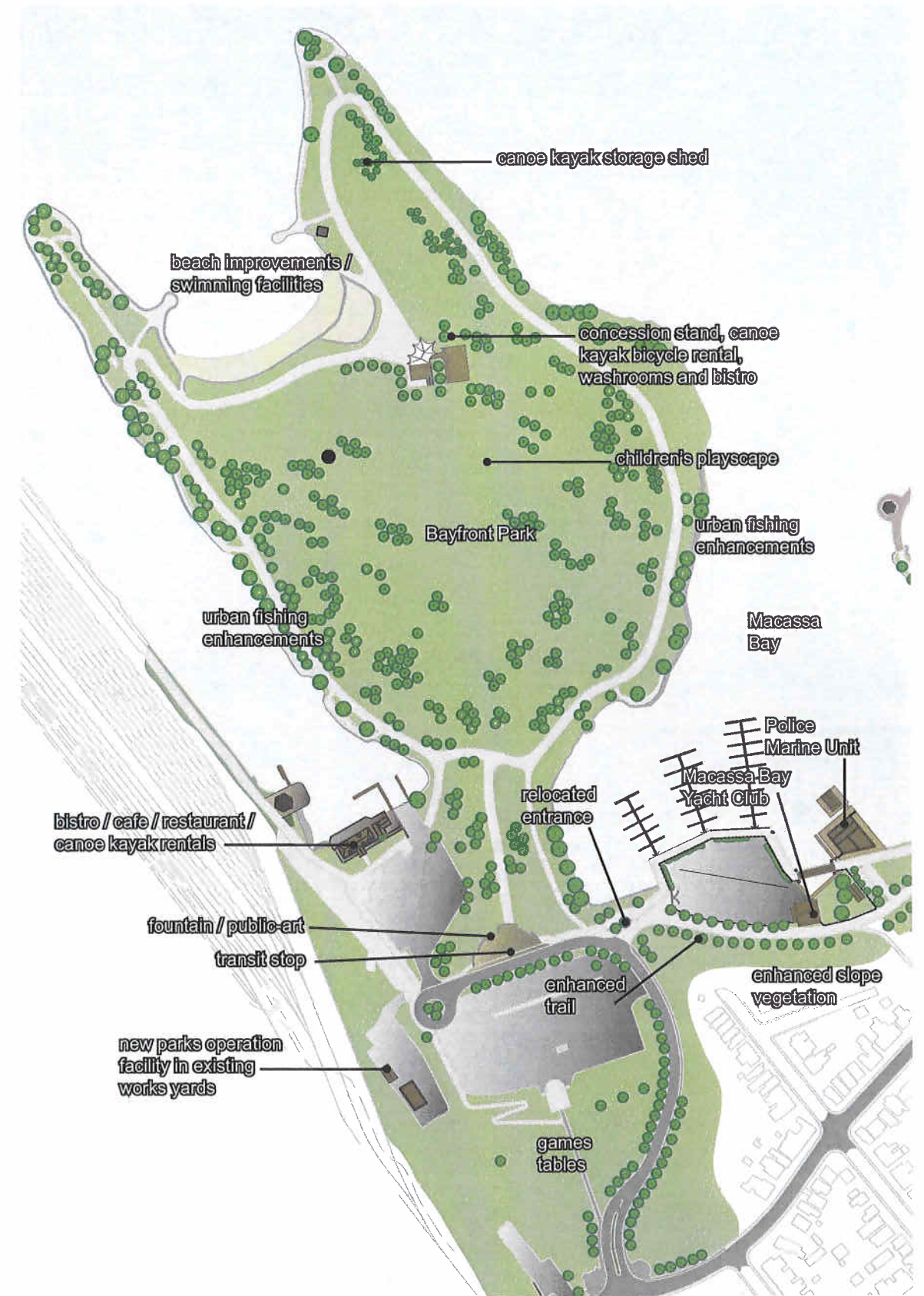


Swimming Facilities

There is no stronger connection to water than swimming. Recreational swimming opportunities will be enhanced through implementation of a form of acceptable technology, such as a separation curtain, environmentally safe treatment and stormwater management to improve beach water quality. The concession stand could also consider the rentals of beach chairs, umbrellas, cabanas and volleyball equipment.



Examples of proposed public fountains



BAYFRONT PARK

Upper Plateau and Washrooms

Bayfront Park's expansive lawn area makes it an ideal location for a number of special events. Programming of the park should continue to bring the thousands of people to the park every year.

The washroom facilities in the main parking lot would receive a significant contemporary upgrade. Also, the open space to the south entrance could see games tables incorporating public art features into their design attracting players to participate in a relaxing game of chess or checkers.

New Concession, Picnic Pavilion and Washrooms

Proposed at the north end of the peninsula, the park would see the construction of a building containing washrooms, change rooms, food concessions along with canoe, kayak, bicycle and paddle boat rentals. Avoiding the boat filled main-basin, the public can safely use recreational boating without damaging property.

This facility could also house a large picnic pavilion to facilitate special events, private functions and family or group picnicking.

New Concession, Picnic Pavilion and Washrooms

A restaurant/bistro is proposed at the western foot of Bayfront Park. Ideally situated to take full advantage of the westerly sunset views, the building design should be transparent to maximize views from adjacent areas.



Transparent bistro building on Burlington's waterfront

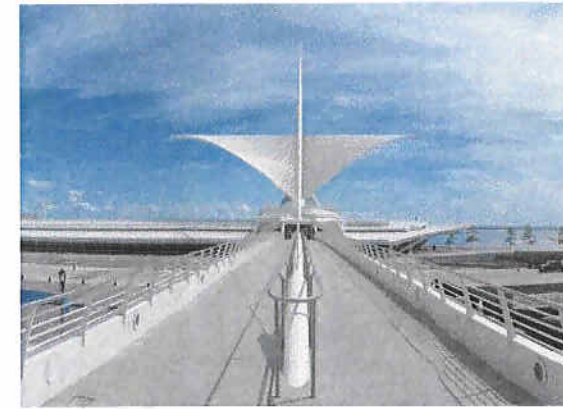


Children's Play

Adding to Bayfront Park is a new playground conceived as a "playscape". For a playground to be considered a "playscape" the space should be as natural as possible, with as little man made components as possible. Using native plants, rolling hills, lots of trees; playscapes represent a natural place such as a forest. Playscapes are designed with the intent of bringing children and people back to nature while offering a wide range of open-ended play options that allow children to be creative and use their imagination.



Children's playscape



Example of potential pedestrian link

Water's Edge

The shoreline along the peninsula needs minor maintenance. This should be seen as an opportunity to enhance fish/wildlife habitat and fishing opportunities which is consistent with the conditions assessment.

Potential Pedestrian Link

A pedestrian connection is recommended to connect the waterfront trail over the rail yards to the potential West Harbour stadium site. This will enhance waterfront access and share parking resources should the stadium become a reality.



Parks Operation Building

Parks operations and maintenance staff should relocate to a new building in the existing works yard to consolidate maintenance activities on the site and outside of the public realm. The new building should provide for amenities such as change rooms with shower facilities and lunch and meeting rooms for seasonal and full time staff.



MACASSA BAY

Overview

Macassa Bay is formed by the shorelines of Bayfront Park to the west and Pier 4 Park to the east. Somewhat sheltered from wave and wind action by the two parks, Macassa Bay is a calm bay which is home to the Macassa Bay Yacht Club and the proposed Police Marine Unit.



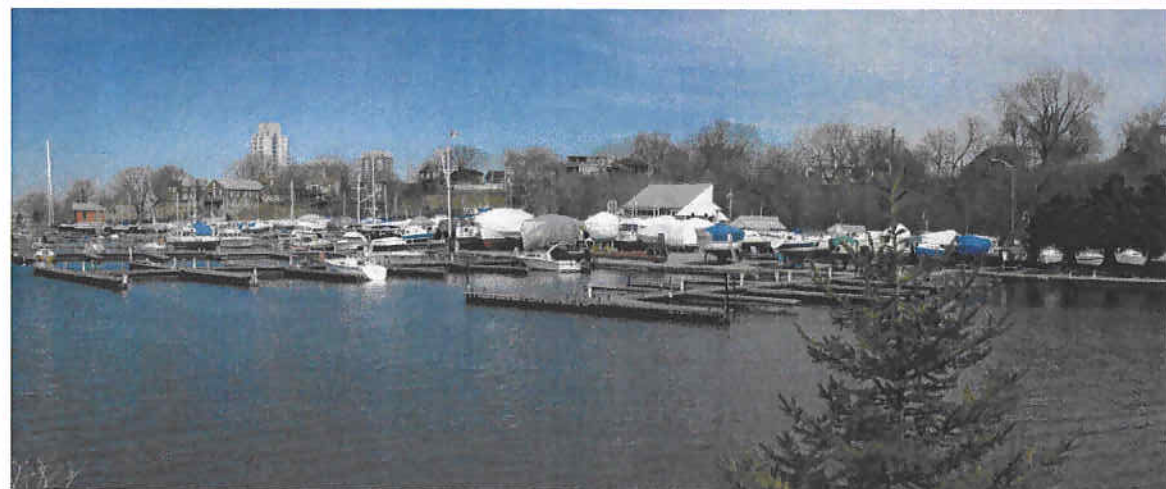
Example of security gate

Club Access and Trail Consolidation

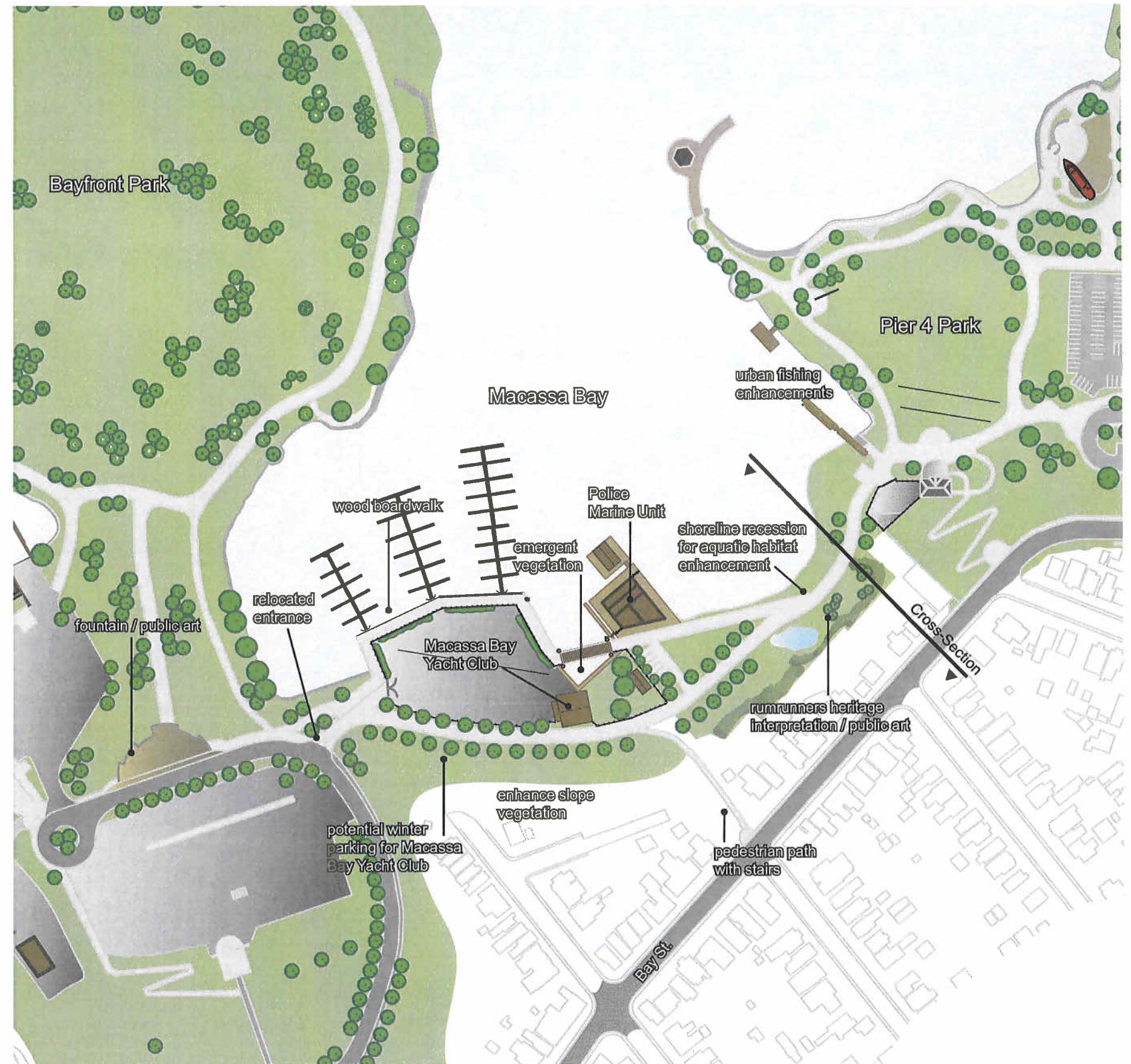
The access lane to the south of the Macassa Bay Yacht Club will become primarily a recreation trail. This will be accomplished by moving the main access point to the club further west at Harbourfront Drive. This opens up a generously dimensioned trail which would accommodate recreational uses including walking, jogging, gathering, sitting, roller blading, wheelchair use, trolley touring and bicycling. The police and emergency services can make use of the route as needed.

During the winter months parking for yacht club members could also occur along this access lane.

Attractive security gates between the publicly accessible boardwalk and the piers will keep boaters' equipment and vessels safe from non-members. A security fence and privacy landscaping is also recommended for the storage area.



Macassa Bay Yacht Club



MACASSA BAY

Water's Edge

Proposed for water's edge at Macassa Bay is a continuous wooden boardwalk which would extend six meters off of a newly constructed dockwall which replaces an existing dockwall which does not meet public standards and is in need of repair. Bridging the slip between Macassa Bay Yacht Club and the proposed Police Marine Facility is a wooden fixed bridge. To the south of the bridge it is suggested that dragon boat storage occur or habitat be increased in the form of a wetland with emergent vegetation.

In addition to the wetland, an opportunity exists to claw back or recede a stretch of the hard edged shoreline into a natural softer shoreline that promotes or increases aquatic habitat.

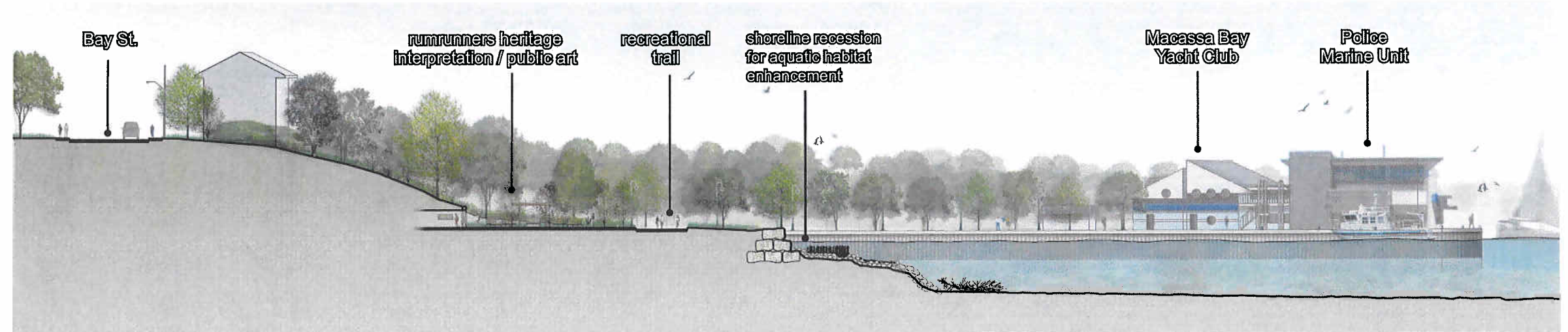
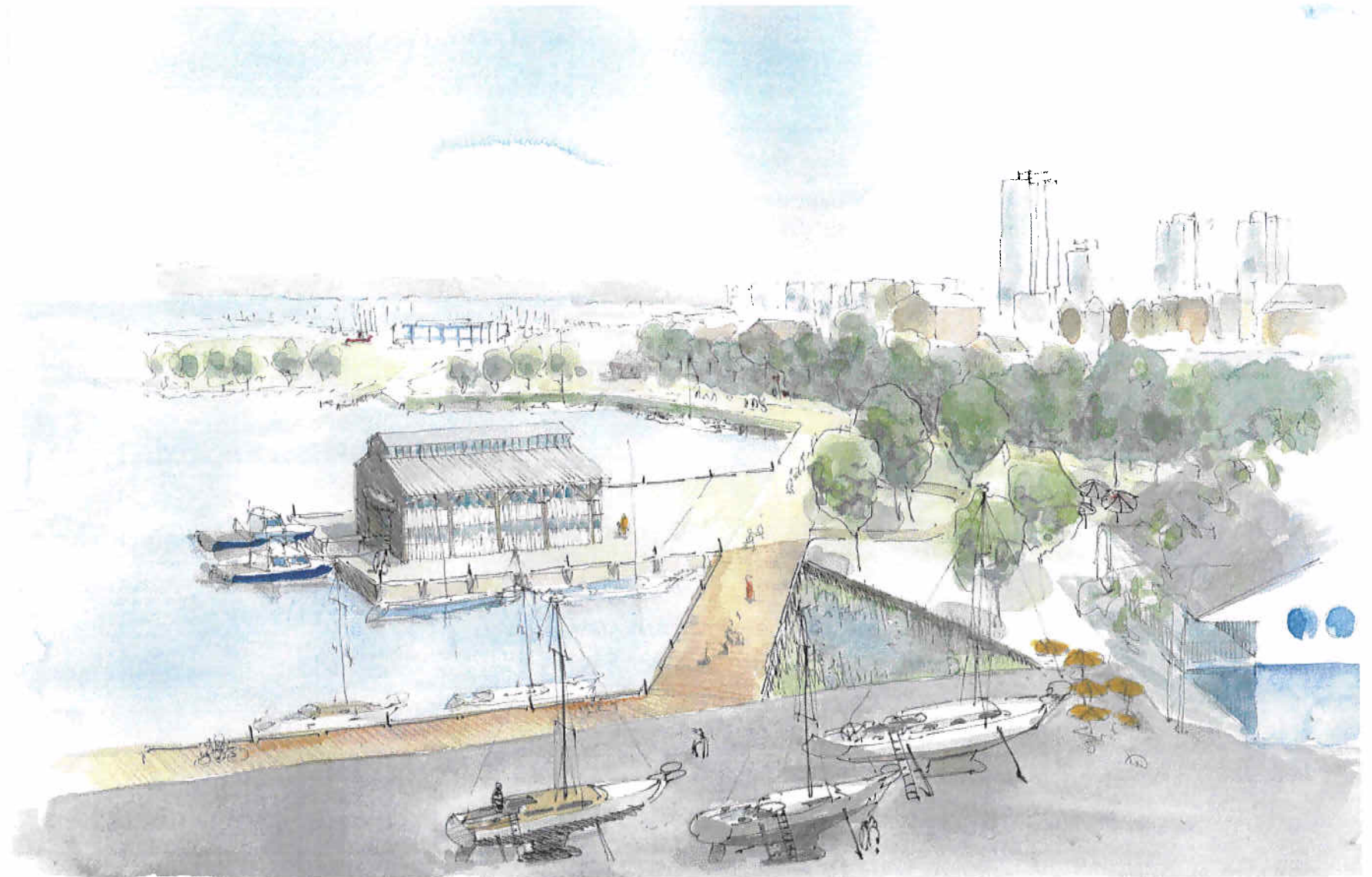
Police Marine Facility

The current police marine facility located in the main basin is inadequate for police operations. Adding on to the existing building is not feasible as the building condition is structurally poor. Proposed is a new building which meets the needs of the police and is contemporary in design. The location is ideal for the police to remain connected with the public with its adjacency to the waterfront trail. Also, having the police within the harbour is welcomed as it helps keep the waterfront safe.

Should the Police Marine Unit find an alternative location outside of the study area, the building could be reused as an interpretive centre or other public use.

Heritage Interpretation Site

Located within the bluffs are remnants of rumrunning that occurred during times of Prohibition. Creating a node of interest along the Waterfront Trail, the historical interpretation of the site is intended to reveal the stories of a darker, illegal past of Hamilton's West Harbour.



PIER 4 PARK

Overview

A more intimate waterfront experience to that of the larger Bayfront Park, Pier 4 Park was developed in the early 1990s creating what is today a charming and picturesque park. The scale of the park is most appropriate for the frequent small festivals that Bayfront Park is too large for.



Bayport and Pavilion

One of the most prominent features of Pier 4 Park is the popular “Bayport” tugboat, an 80 foot tugboat refurbished as a creative play structure with accessible components. The Bayport is a unique, interactive play area including water spray pad that should be maintained as a feature in the park.

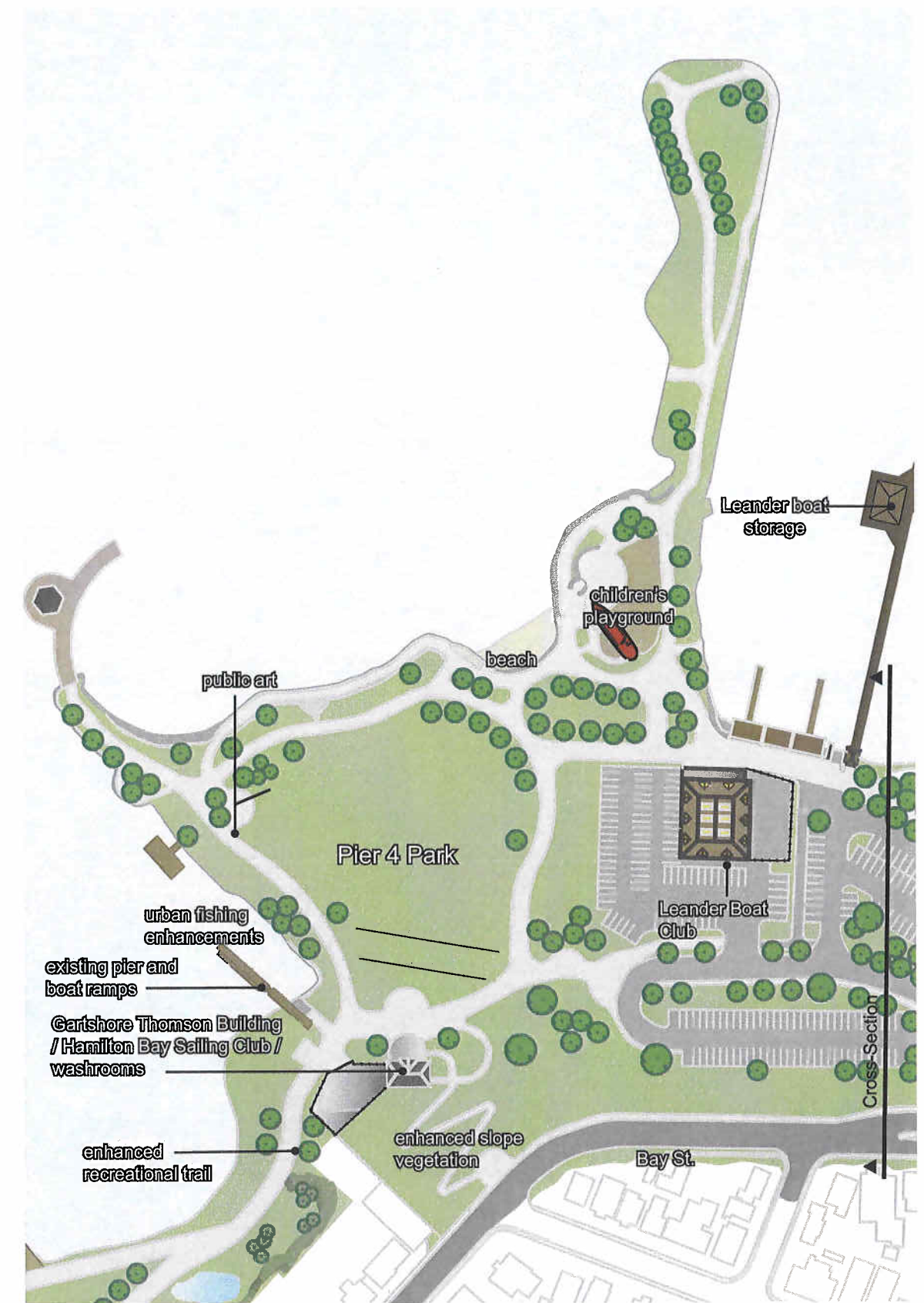
Trail Modifications

The Pier 4 pedestrian/cycling trails are ambiguous at points and require layout modifications to further strengthen and make obvious the routes for pedestrians and cyclists. Visual cues such as linear public art, continuous pavers at the edge of the asphalt trail may help to delineate the network. In addition to layout modifications, materials should be consistent throughout the trail or paths. Curbs should be introduced wherever possible to further clarify the separation between trails and vehicular roadways. The trail should also be realigned away from the Bayport play structure keeping a safe distance from children playing.



Trails around Pier 4 Park

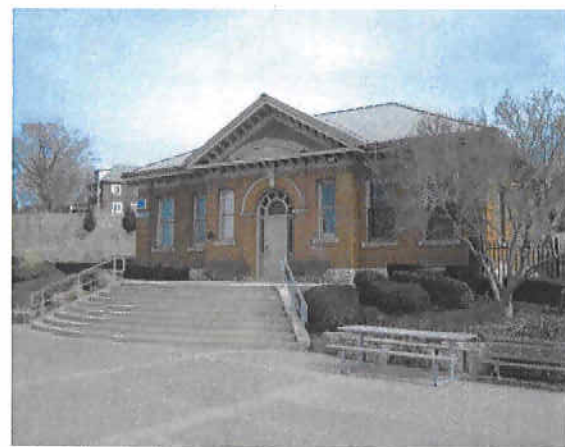
Bayport Tugboat on Pier 4



PIER 4 PARK

Gartshore Thomson Building

The relocated Gartshore Thomson building, a late 19th century brick office building nestled on a rehabilitated slope houses public washrooms and parks offices on the upper floor. The lower level of the building is home to the Hamilton Bay Sailing Club. While no changes are suggested to the ground floor for the Hamilton Bay Sailing Club, the washrooms do require upgrading with increases in number of stalls if possible. It is also anticipated that the parks operations will move from this building to a new location at Bayfront Park. The upper floor could be used for club expansion, park programming or as museum space.



Gartshore Thomson Building

Leander Rowing Club

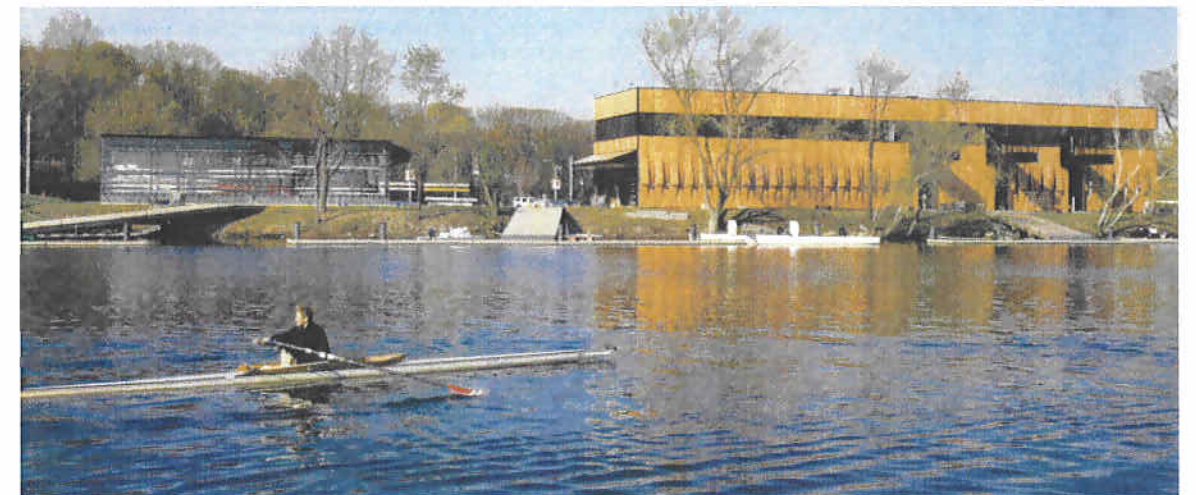
The Leander Rowing Club is to remain in their current building with a storage compound beside it. However, improvements to the building are necessary: a contemporary façade should be introduced to modernize and update the building's tired appearance. Functionally, the building should take better advantage of its layout by rearranging its interior training facility, which currently prevents sculls from exiting the building along a north south axis. Roll-up doors or similar openings would provide convenient access to sculls and would reveal the club's activities to the curious public.

Additional boat storage on the public pier is also a possibility for Leander. A light, floating boat house would be desirable for storage of the longer eight person sculls.

Existing docks will remain and be replaced as needed.



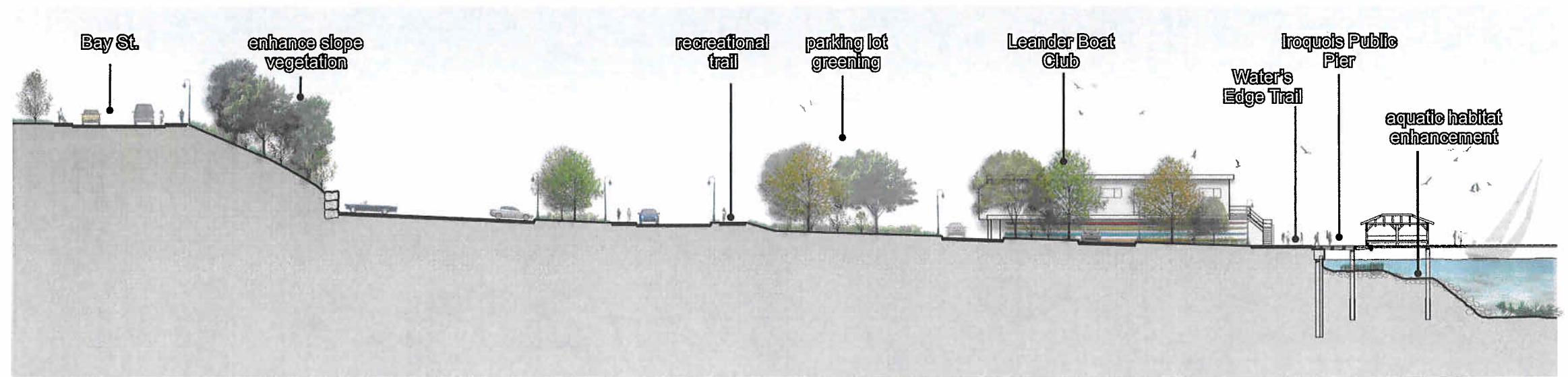
Leander Boat Club



above: Community Rowing Boathouse on shores of Boston's Charles River -design potential for Leander Boat Club



left: Boat storage bay on shores of Boston's Charles River -extra storage opportunity off the public pier



Cross Section

BAYVIEW PARK

Overview

Bayview Park is a local neighbourhood park with a desirable overlook and immediacy to the West Harbour. The topographical change at the northern edge of the park makes the site an ideal location for subgrade parking. Bayview Park is currently an underperforming park that has opportunity to see a greatly improved neighbourhood landscape space.

Park Features

A hard landscaped promontory to the northern edge of the park will take advantage of the panoramic views to the waterfront.

Extending opportunities to create a high quality neighbourhood park by adding additional trees, seating, amenities such as a water fountain, pergola and public art. This will bring new life to the public space and turn the park into a great public destination that is lively, secure and distinct in character.

The north edge of Bayview Park at Guise Street should blend the face of the parking structure into that of the bluff with berms and dense vegetation. A plaza with grand staircase invites people up and down from the promontory to the waterfront at the corner of MacNab Street and Guise Street.

The Burlington Glass Works, one of the most important nineteenth century glass houses of the area, was previously located on the site of Bayview Park. The archaeological work done in the late 1960s on the site can be used to reveal and promote a potential heritage interpretation feature.

Parking Structure

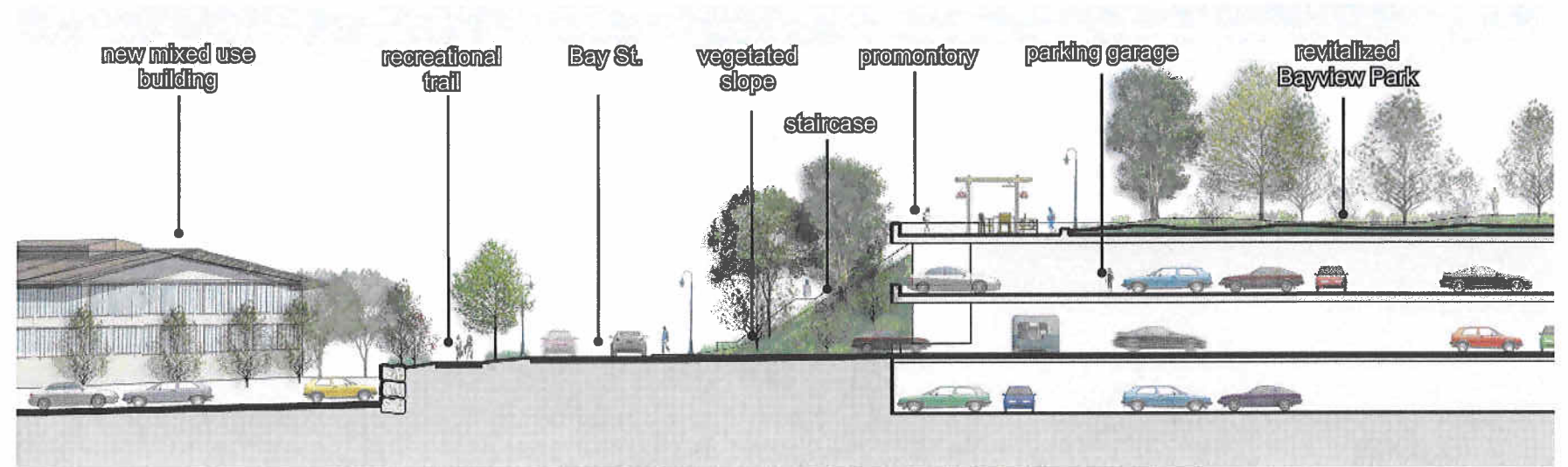
The parking structure should be inconspicuous in the landscape. Topography and vegetation should attempt to reduce the impact of the structure within the harbour landscape.

To minimize traffic into the neighbourhoods, main access to the parking structure should occur off of MacNab Street with an overflow egress occurring off of Guise Street during larger events.

It is anticipated that the parking garage will hold approximately four hundred vehicles with a basic rectangular layout.



Panoramic view from Bayview Park



Cross Section



MAIN BASIN

Overview

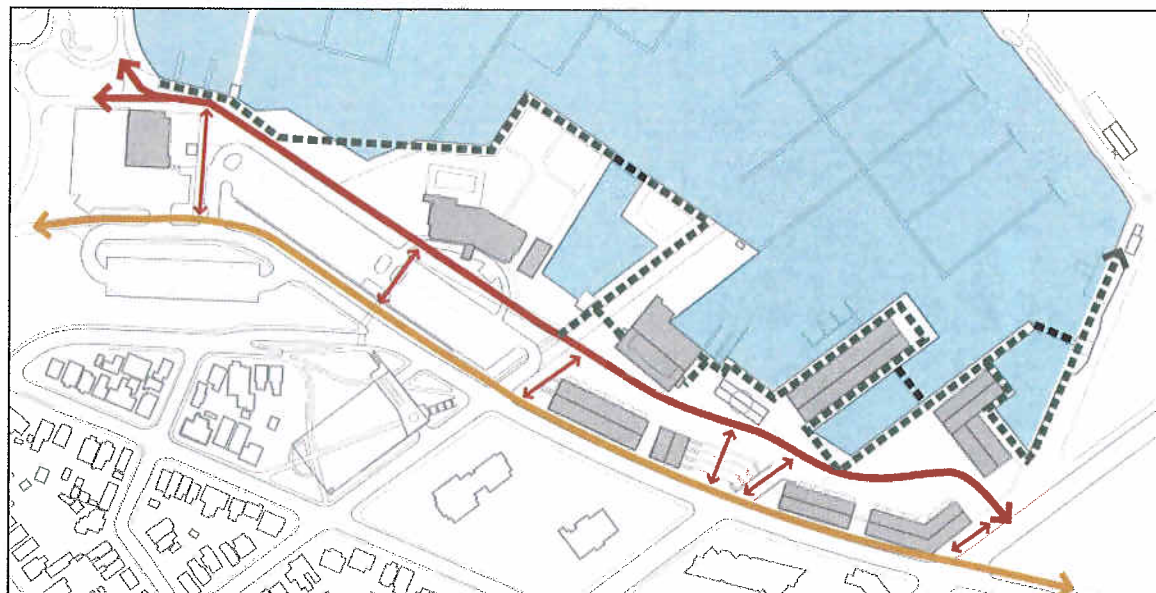
The main basin is the anticipated heart of the Harbour West precinct. The current parking lot and boat storage area will be converted through the introduction of new and the re-use of existing buildings. Programmatically, plaza spaces and commercial/retail will enhance the area making the foot of James Street a focal point and a gateway to the waterfront. Once drawn to the waterfront, a continuous boardwalk will give users a more immediate connection with Hamilton Harbour.

Water's Edge and Slip Access

With a significant goal of increasing pedestrian access to the water's edge, a six meter boardwalk will border the main basin wherever possible. Design of a boardwalk supported by piles will minimize lakefilling to the harbour while enhancing aquatic habitat below.

Dock connections should be minimized and consolidated. The access points will be located as generally illustrated in the master plan while the dock layout will be further detailed during detail design phases.

Similar to that of Macassa Bay, attractive security gates between the publicly accessible boardwalk and the piers will keep boaters equipment and vessels safe from non-members.



- recreational trail
- waterfront trail
- water's edge trail
- trail connections



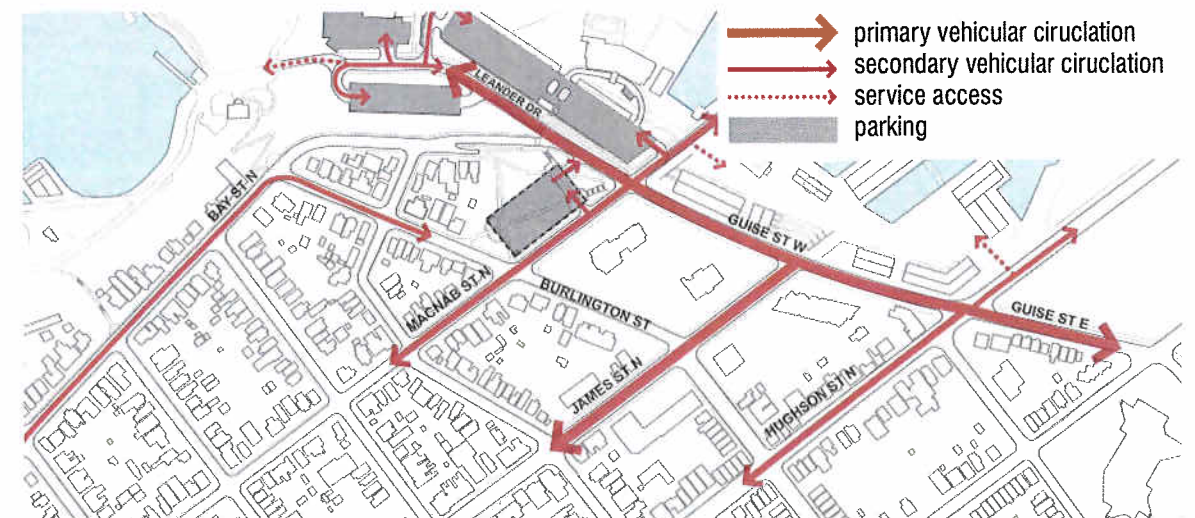
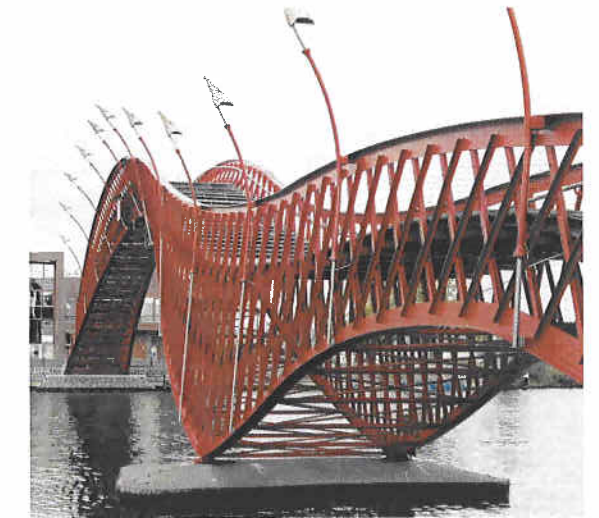
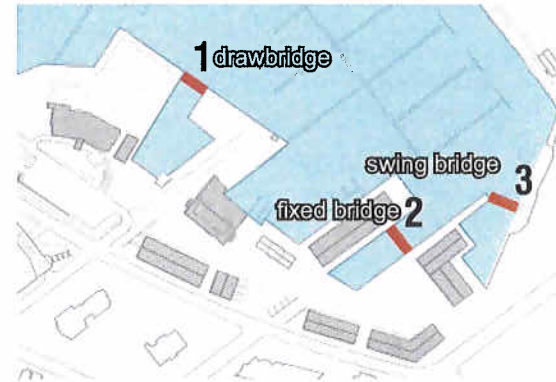
Waterfront Precincts
MAIN BASIN

Trail Network

A variety of recreation modes will be accommodated, including walking, cycling and rollerblading. To accomplish this, the main basin area will have clearly marked and generously dimensioned trails. The slower meandering trail will follow the shoreline giving users an up-close relationship with the water. Ample space between buildings will form a plaza accommodating the waterfront trail while setting the stage for special events to occur. A more direct urban path situated along Guise Street will define the southern edge of the main basin precinct and provide for fluid movement of pedestrians and cyclist. The provision of these three parallel routes with the active urban core of the waterfront will provide flexibility and vary according to seasonal demand, site programming and user preference.

Pedestrian Bridges

In order to facilitate a continuous pedestrian route at the water's edge, pedestrian bridges are proposed along the water's edge. These structures will allow for creative design, generating a point of interest and opportunities for them to become destinations. Bridging the gap at the sailing school basin is a draw bridge which can be raised and lowered as needed. The two slips in Pier 7 will also have bridges; the westerly one being fixed and the easterly being an optional swing bridge. The swing bridge would allow for docking of vessels brought in for special occasions such as Tall Ships.



Vehicular circulation and parking

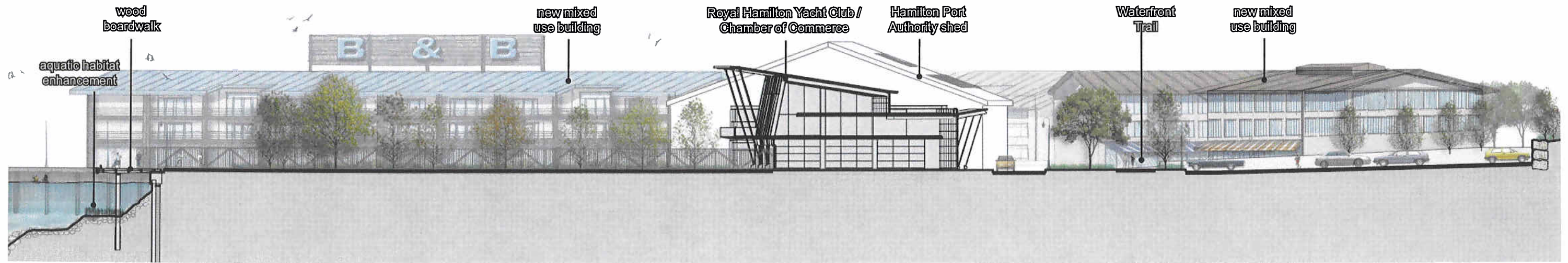
MAIN BASIN

Royal Hamilton Yacht Club (RHYC) and Sailing Club

The RHYC building will remain where it is currently located. Both façade and building improvements are necessary to update or freshen the aesthetics of the building and add additional space as required. The sailing school however, is beyond improvement and should be replaced. In its place, a contemporary sailing school building could be situated closer to the RHYC building, if feasible. The relocation will make a stronger connection between the sailing school and the RHYC and will open up views to the sailing school basin. An attractive fence and landscaping will provide security to the club's operations and enhance the contemporary architecture while framing the RHYC site in the harbour

Gas Dock

The gas dock is situated in a convenient spot for boaters and is intended to remain within this area. The main vehicular access to the gas dock will be slightly re-aligned with MacNab Street. The dockwall for the gas dock should be shaped and extended to align with the new boardwalk at the RHYC site.



Cross Section A

MAIN BASIN

James Street Landing Public Realm

The foot of James proposal aims to regain a sense of place, memorable character and renewed cultural and social relevance for the site as a genuine piece of the city.

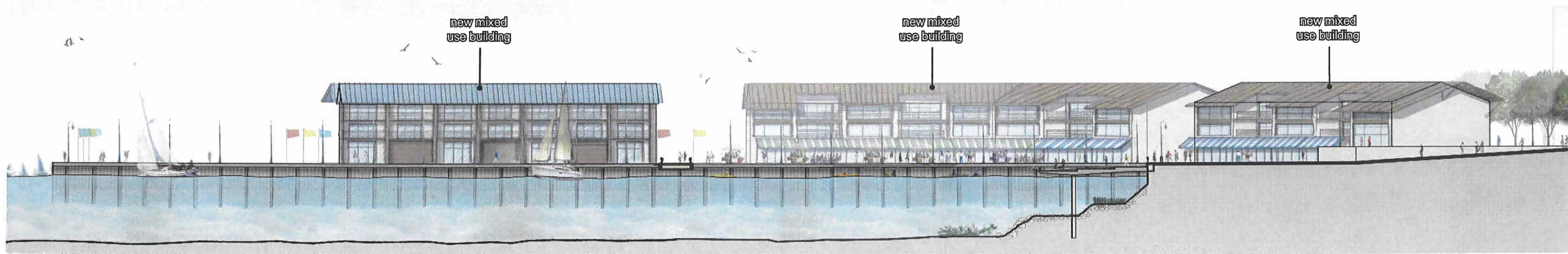
With the relocation of winter boat storage, the foot of James Street will be transformed into a casual meeting space. A significant grade change between Guise Street and the plaza creates an opportunity to have outdoor terraced seating. Terraces overlooking the outdoor space allow for spill out areas from adjacent commercial buildings. The plaza below Guise Street invites users into the space by an accessible large ramp aligned to James Street. Open views from James Street should be maintained to accentuate the importance and scale of the landing. A significant public art piece will add to festive atmosphere that is envisioned for this area.



Guise Street Mixed Commercial

With close proximity to the street, the south face of the buildings will create an urban edge to the waterfront. The buildings of contemporary style would need to be two storeys in height on the street side and three storeys on the waterfront side in order to accommodate for the significant grade change. Terraces break the continuous building edge to allow for views to the plaza and waterfront below. The terraces can also double as programmable space for cafés or restaurants.

New buildings situated on Guise Street should be setback eight meters from the edge of curb. This will give ample room for a row of street trees and a generous trail.



Cross Section B

MAIN BASIN

Reuse of Port Authority Buildings

The Port Authority sheds are easily recognized as the icon of the western waterfront. The larger of the two buildings house offices, workshops and boat slips. The large interior spaces are ideal for reuse as a multi-purpose public building that can easily animate the lower James and MacNab plaza spaces.

The Port Authority dock rental office/management is currently located within a large metal shed. It is intended that these offices would remain in operation while the maintenance area be adapted for public use. Such uses could include a public market or community teaching space.

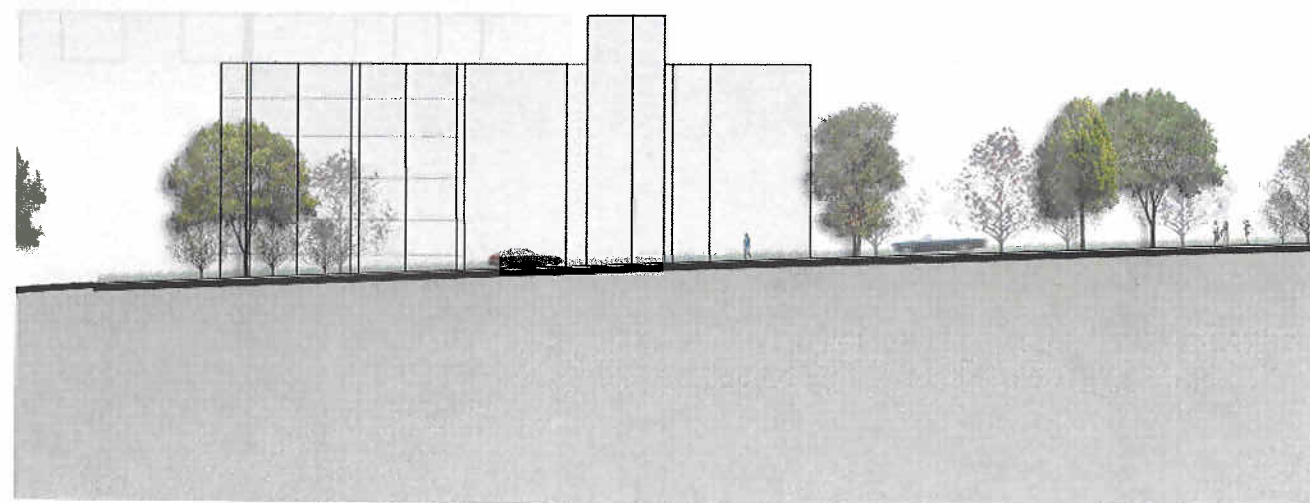
Mixed Use Pier Buildings

Two new mixed use buildings will be situated on Pier 6 and Pier 7. Programmatically, the buildings would have retail, cafés, pubs and overnight accommodations. Following the character of the mixed commercial buildings on Guise Street, these buildings would of contemporary architecture influenced by the industrial waterfront shed architecture. Within the area of the mixed use buildings is a large programmable space.



Varnishing Shed

It is suggested that the varnishing shed be adapted to become a multipurpose covered space working with the proposed terraced seating to the south. Stripping the structure of its walls and leaving the roof would provide adequate cover for small performances that could easily spill out into the plaza. The protective canopy could also be used as market space.

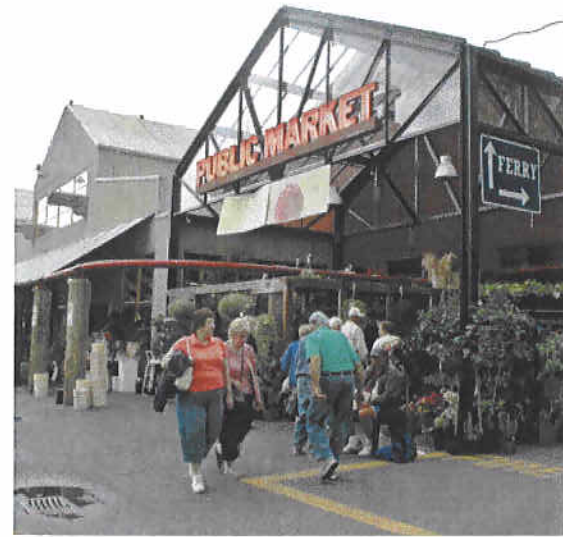


Cross Section B

URBAN DESIGN

Buildings in the Public Realm

Buildings need to address the open areas through appropriate use-selection: at-grade uses should be porous and limited to highly public shops, retail, pubs and cafés or artisan uses. Façades at-grade should open up to these public areas through the use of rolling doors, storefronts, extensive glazing, outdoor eating/display, and canopies.

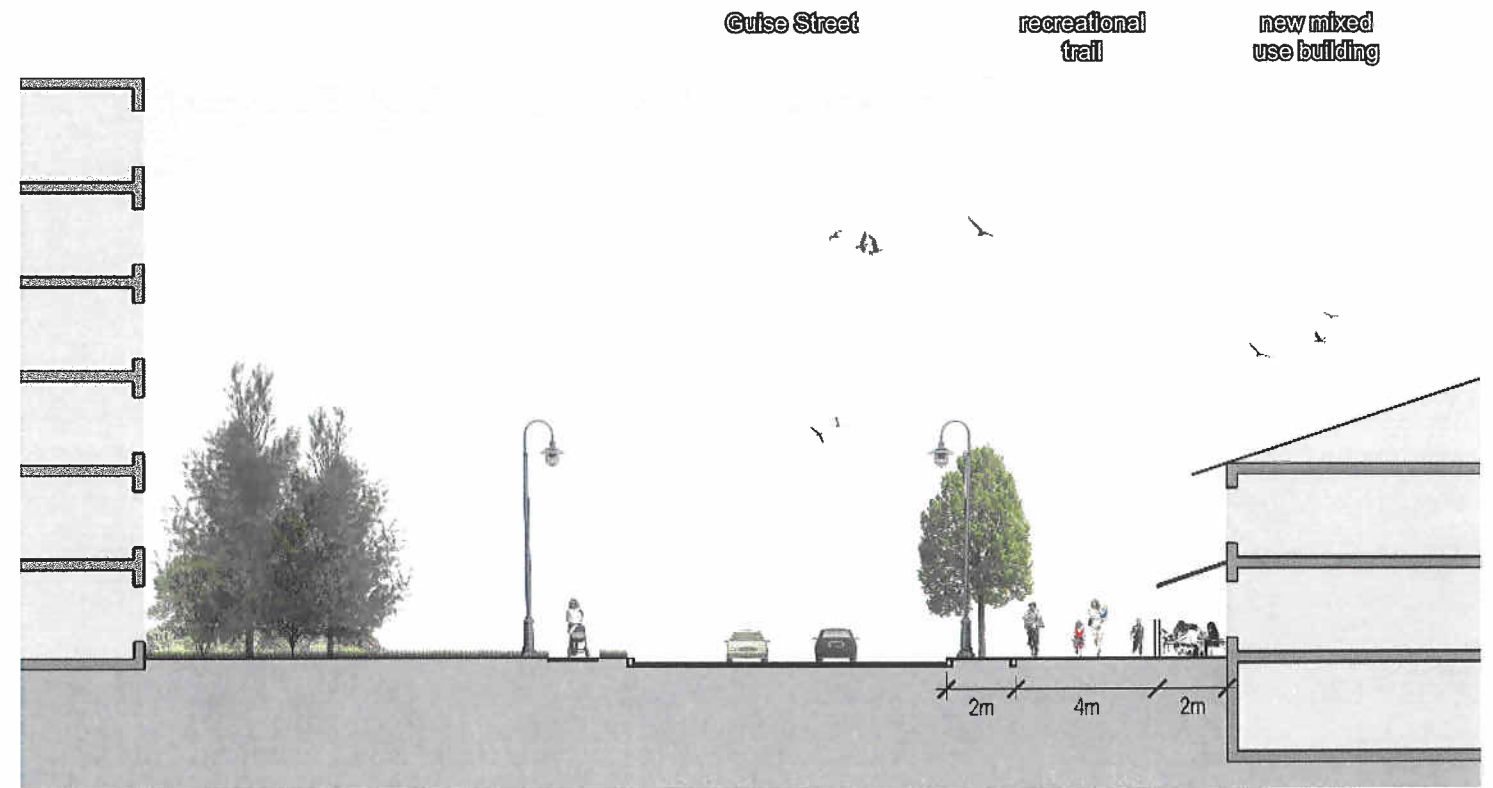
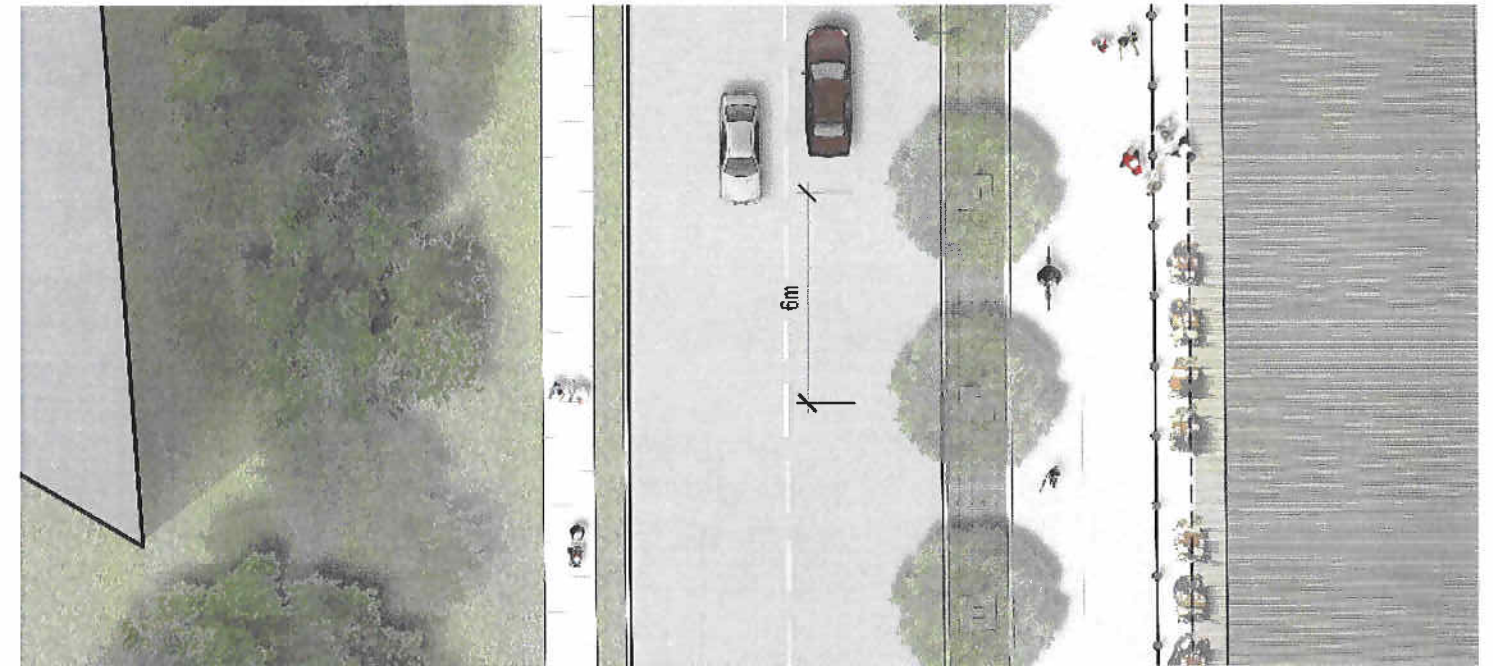


The West Harbour Waterfront Commercial Opportunity Study, prepared by Malone Given Parsons in 2008, recommends niche commercial for the West Harbour Waterfront consisting of a mix of Civic Arts/Event Centre, Seasonal/Artisan Market, Restaurants/Cafés, Specialty Retail Stores and Upper Floor Offices. Council endorsed the 2008 Hamilton Waterfront Trust base plan, which identifies overnight accommodation and upper floor residential uses. Due to site constraints and a lack of vehicular access to the plaza area of the West Harbour study area, vehicular drop off and parking for overnight accommodation space would need to be resolved during site plan review.

Building entrances, particularly those of the single-use boat clubs need to have a proper identity. This would be comprised of an appropriate landscape, but also an identifiable and prominent façade, indicating the building's entrance.

Street Relationship

New construction on Guise Street should emphasize a positive relationship between buildings and the street. Effort should be put towards preventing a barrier that physically and psychologically cuts off the city from the waterfront. This can be achieved through store-front type identities, permeable entrances and large gaps between buildings providing good views to the waterfront. All new development along Guise should be set back eight meters in order to allow for a two meter pedestrian zone next to shop fronts, a four meter recreational path and a two meter tree planting or boulevard zone next to the street curb.



Typical cross section at Guise Street

URBAN DESIGN

Pedestrian and Recreation Circulation

It is anticipated that there will be a variety of recreational modes of movement throughout the harbour. Bordering the southern edge of the harbour would be a trail accommodating the higher speed activities such as bicycling and in-line skating. The layout of this path should not be divergent. Instead, it should have generous curvatures and/or straight lines connecting the precincts in the harbour.

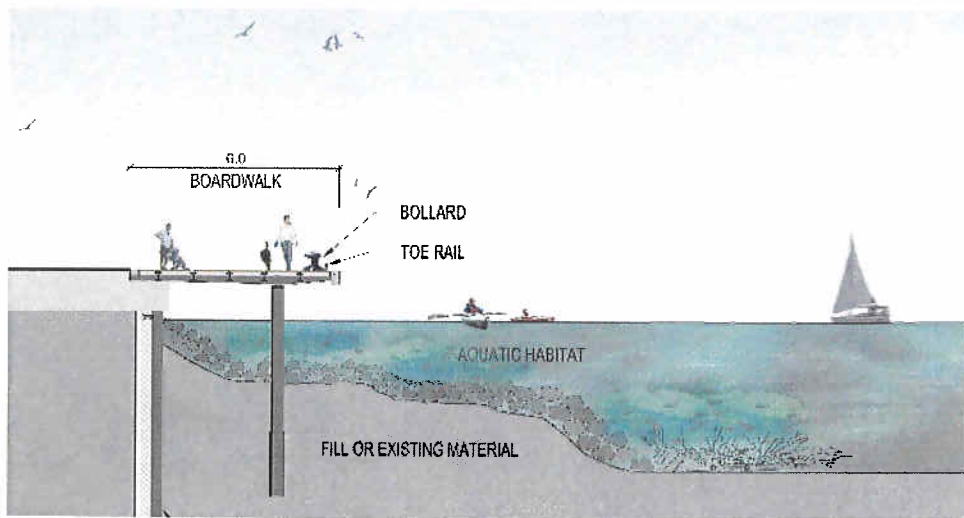
The main "Waterfront Trail" is intended to accommodate a variety of commuting and recreational uses including walking, jogging, gathering, sitting, rollerblading, wheelchair use, trolley touring and bicycling. More sinuous than the high speed trail, its layout attempts to bring users closer to the water's edge while experiencing the amenities within the harbour.

The water's edge is intended to be a more relaxed trail which gives its users an intimate connection with the water. Not intended for high speed activities, the water's edge trail traces the dock edge with a series of wooden boardwalks extended over the water. To ensure connectivity across the jagged structure of slip basins and inlets, timber pedestrian bridges extend the wooden boardwalk along the water's edge to leap over slips, ensuring continuity of the route. It is here that people get the full experience of the Hamilton West Harbour.



Recreational circulation

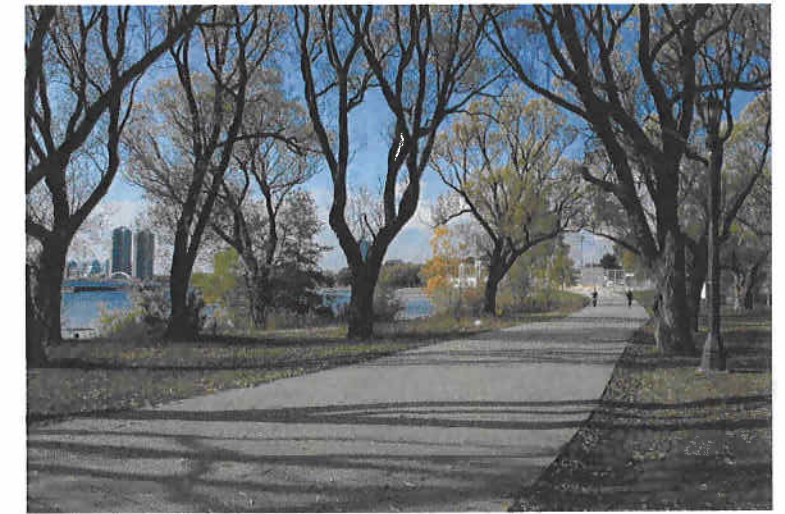
- waterfront trail
- main basin
- water's edge trail



Typical boardwalk section



Recreational path precedent



URBAN DESIGN

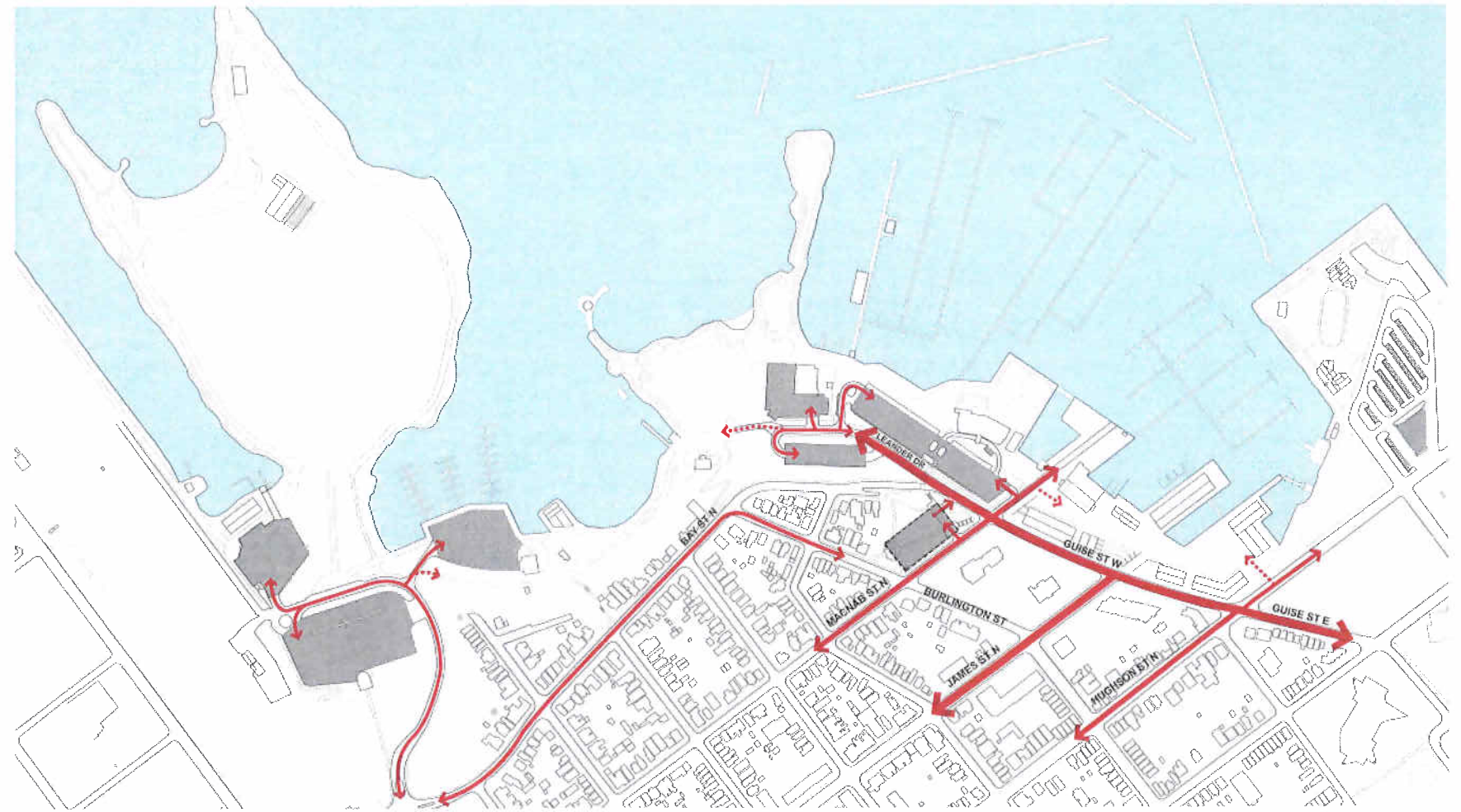
Vehicular Circulation and Parking

The vehicular circulation and parking in the West Harbour is confusing and needs to be clarified and delineated. Currently, parking, vehicular access, recreational trails and marine staging areas co-mingle with inconsistent paving materials, signage or other cues. Greater coherence should be distinguished through material palette. Clarifying parking lot access, distinguishing staging areas and separating recreation pathways is recommended.





The vast amount of land in the West Harbour is currently dedicated to cars, traffic, and parking lots creates a huge opportunity to create spaces that better serve pedestrians and recreational users. The parking lot and access roads to the south of the RHYC and Leander Rowing Club could see the most benefit from a slight reconfiguration and reduction in the drive aisle dimensions. This reduction in drive aisle space would introduce a desired extra width that would benefit from some street trees. Breaking the large expanse of asphalt are large vegetated islands in the parking lot that will create green forecourts to the both the parking lot and clubs.

An additional four hundred parking spaces could be added through the construction of a parking garage at Bayview Park. Primary access into the parking garage would occur along MacNab Street with an overflow exit on Guise Street. The slight addition in parking will accommodate the increased parking demands on the Hamilton West Harbour.

Capital construction within the West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan study area, save repairs and maintenance, should not commence until a Traffic Management Plan for the North End Neighbourhood is approved by Council.



Vehicular circulation and parking

-  primary vehicular circulation
-  secondary vehicular circulation
-  service access
-  parking

URBAN DESIGN

Views

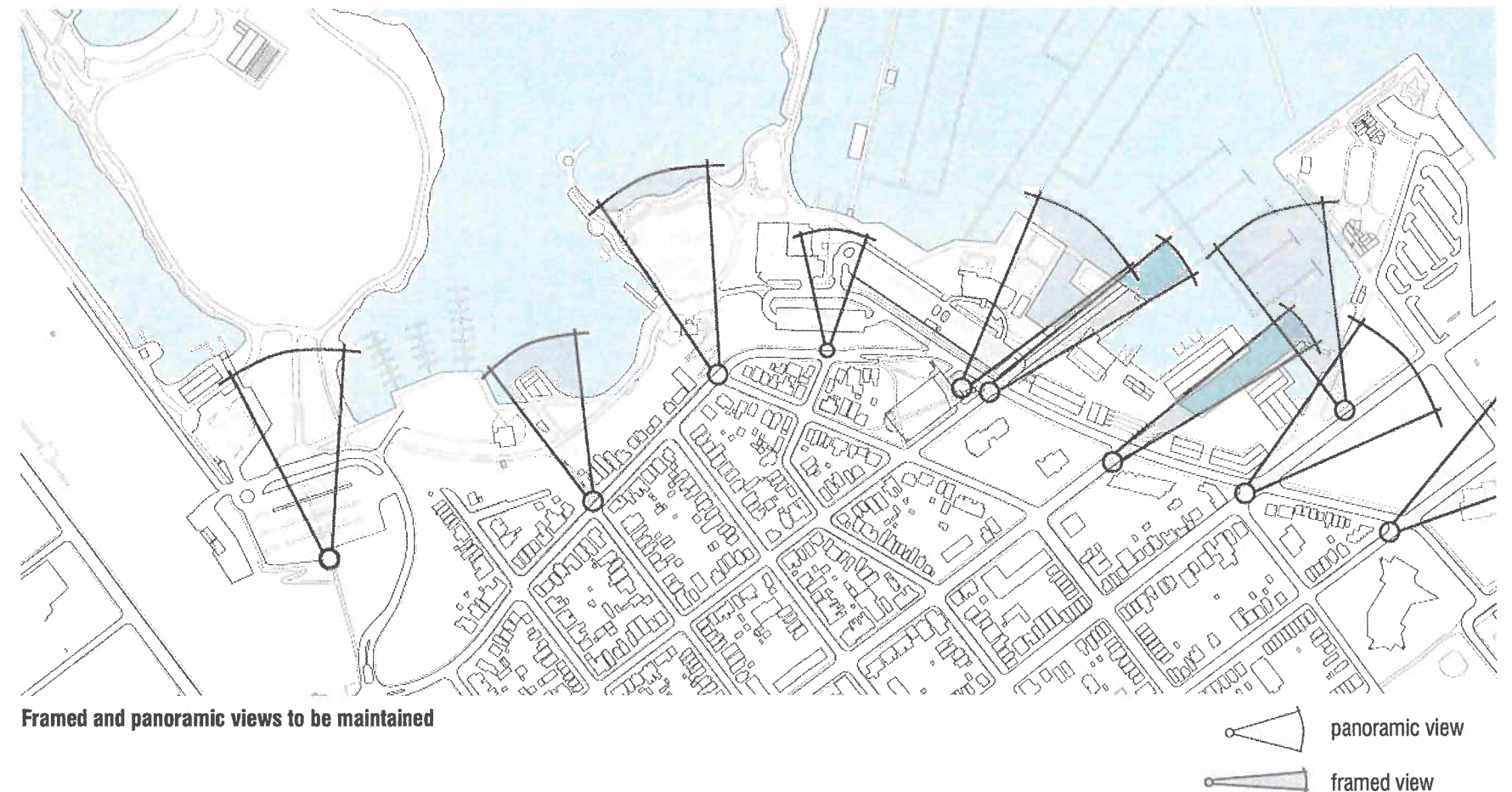
The goal is to protect views to and from the waterfront by establishing view corridors on streets and public spaces and by controlling building heights and profiles in important viewsheds.

Schedule M5 of the Setting Sail Secondary Plan for the West Harbour identifies Key Views and Vistas to and from the study area. One of the targets of the Remedial Action Plan is to complete a viewshed study, and the completed report should be used as guidance to the development of key views both to and from the harbour.

Views out onto the harbor and to important cultural destinations such as the Marine Discovery Centre and Dundurn National Historic Site not only need to be preserved, but also enhanced. View corridors extending from main intersections along Guise at MacNab, James and Hughson Streets also need to be preserved and enhanced to promote connection to the city. Significant views from other key locations in the city should also be preserved such as the impressive view from the High Level Bridge.

The foot of James Street will now have open views to the water and will invite users into the plaza with overlooks at Guise Street.

The ridge overlooking the harbour from the adjacent neighbourhood creates many opportunities for outlooks to the water. One key opportunity is Bayview Park and the proposed promontory at its northern edge overlooking the west harbour from an elevated view. Other viewing areas such as the accessible walk behind the Gartshore Thomson building should be preserved and enhanced.



Framed and panoramic views to be maintained



View of Hamilton West Harbour from High Level Bridge

ARCHITECTURE

Existing Buildings + Artifacts

Old buildings provide historical continuity with the past and are indicative of the distinctive architectural character of the waterfront.

Consequently the character-defining elements of the waterfront must be safeguarded to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life. This may include preservation, rehabilitation, restoration or a combination of these actions or processes.

Reconstruction or reconstitution of a disappeared or non-relevant architectural style does not contribute to the character of the harbourfront and therefore must be avoided.

Furthermore, creating a false sense of historical development by adding elements from other historic places, other properties, or styles (such as the new village style) is also to be avoided.

When the waterfront was industrial and port-related, it had distinctive waterfront architecture. Remnants of that legacy exist on Pier 8. When the Harbor began accommodating boat-users, a similar pier-shed building was used. The Hamilton Port Authority's storage shed is a remnant of this ongoing legacy. Programming for these existing buildings should involve minimal or no change to the character-defining elements that are essential to preserving the waterfront character.

Right: Architectural remnants of the waterfront's character & legacy



Above: Images of Hamilton's historic working waterfront featuring narrow pitch & flat roofs. (Prints over Hamilton 2006)



ARCHITECTURE

New Development

As a highly public and unique space within the city, the waterfront requires a distinctive architecture. The design and configuration of open space and new buildings should support the importance and future of this.

New development will predominantly occur along Guise Street and in the main basin area. Generally speaking, Guise Street separates public waterfront activities to the north and private developments to the south. New pier building forms arranged across the waterfront are to be differentiated from the house-forms of the north-end neighbourhood, reinforcing the distinctive harbourfront character.

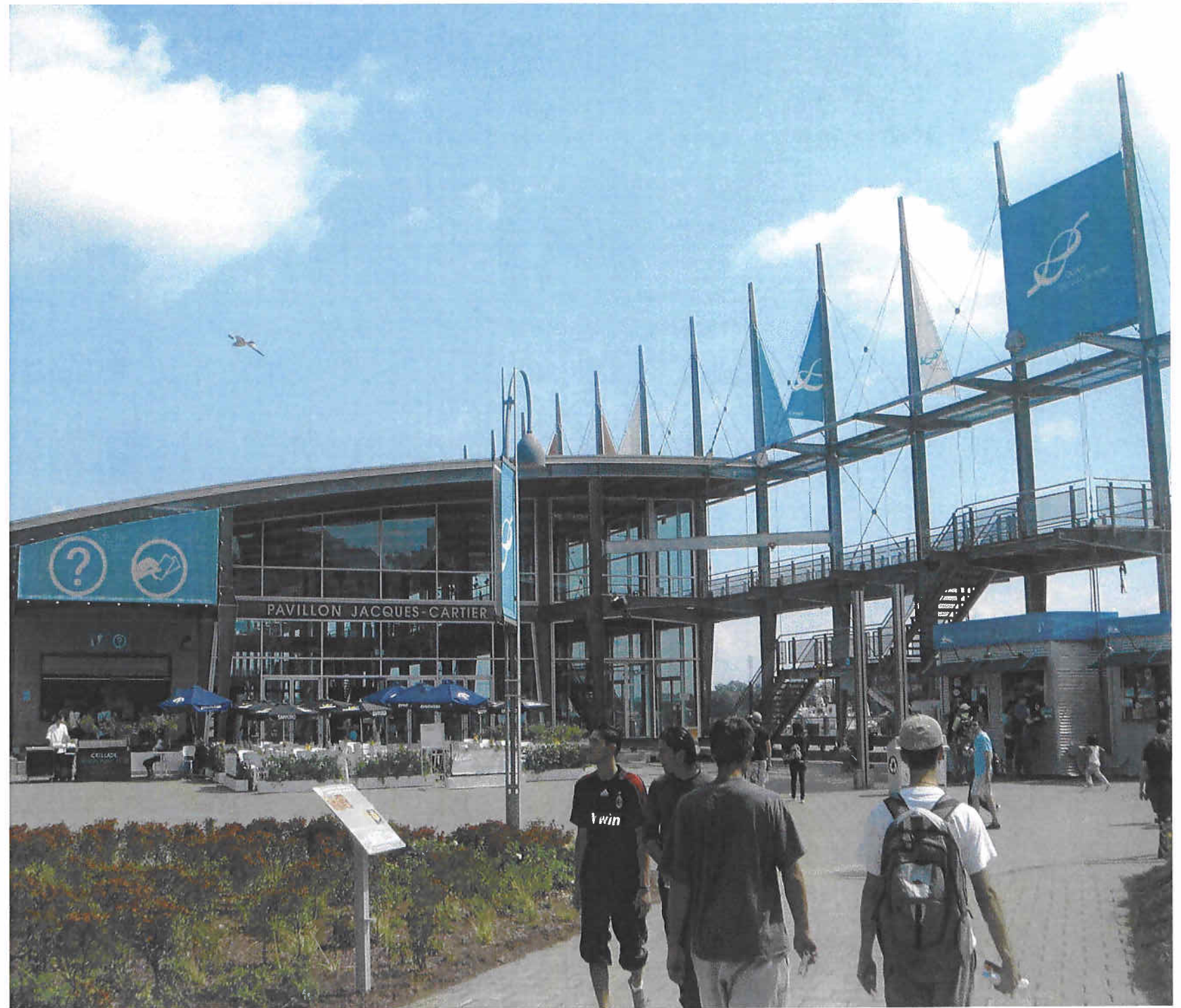
The overall form should be long and narrow, similar to the buildings found along the West Harbour in Pier 8. This is an appropriate form as it is low, can frame and maximize views, but also be used to create micro climates and consistent street walls.

Through façade improvements and additions, the boat clubs should attempt to either maintain the character of the original buildings or reference a nautical theme in the architecture. This includes repeated exposed structural elements, horizontal punched openings, and articulated railings. Many good waterfront buildings reference the characteristics of ships – echoing elements such as a weighted hull & lightened superstructure, masts, cables, etc.

The West Harbour precinct should showcase sustainably designed buildings and be a model for other sustainable development within Hamilton. Buildings should meet LEED or equivalent sustainable design principles.



At Right and Above: Images of Montreal's waterfront district featuring architecture and urban design elements that are contemporary. Repeated structural elements, bouy-like lighting, sail-like flags & signage, and mast-like and cabled vertical structures.

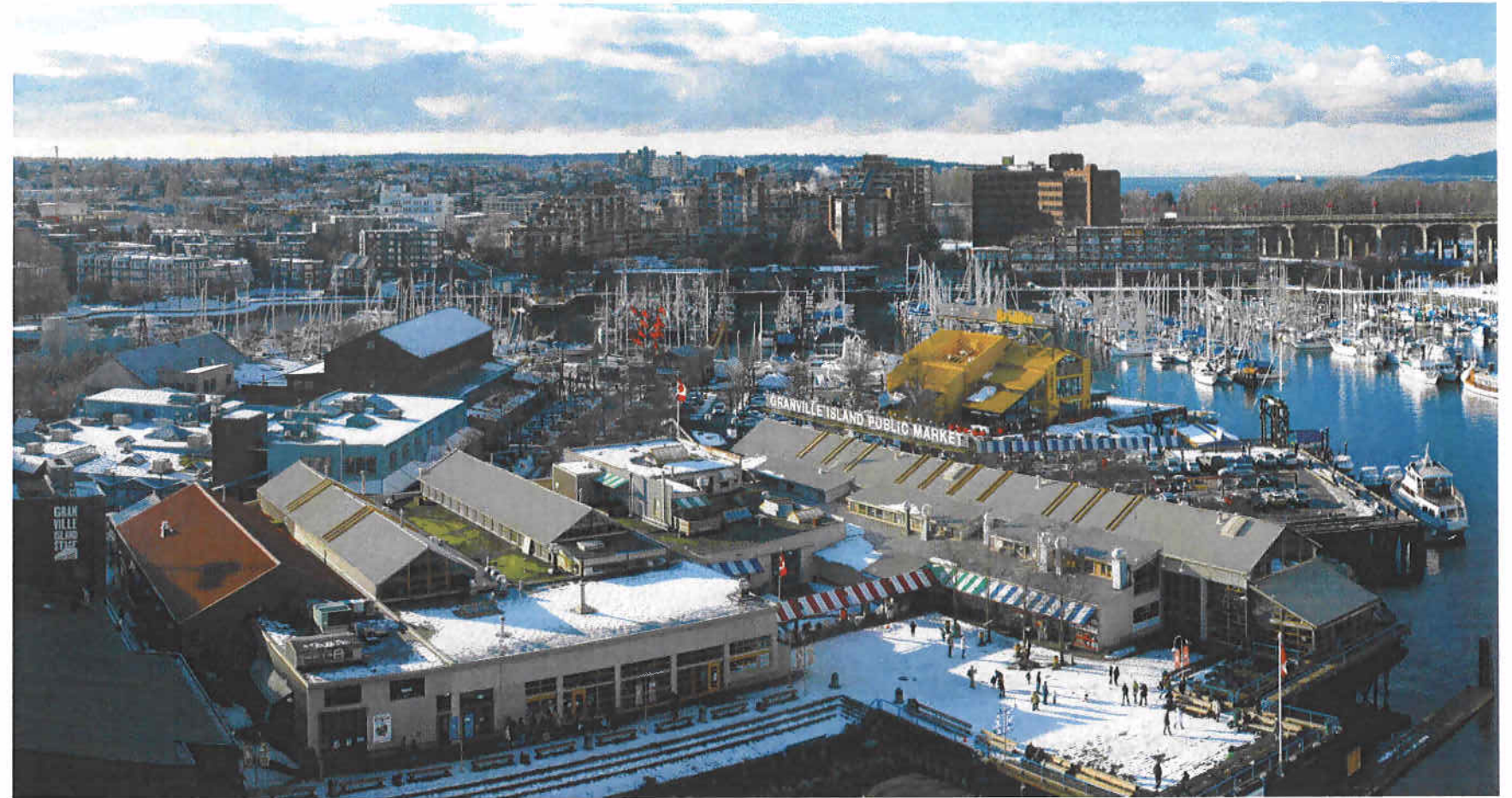


ARCHITECTURE

Shed Buildings

The Hamilton West Harbour collection of existing buildings is an eclectic mix of building types and introducing a new style will not enhance the cohesion of this district. Rather, a contemporary interpretation of existing forms, sympathetic to the traditional waterfront shed-form buildings can begin to bring harmony and distinction to the district.

The new shed-like pier buildings would have a single longitudinally peaked roofline, echoing that of existing buildings. A minimum roof pitch of 7:12 - 9:12 should be used. The intent is to provide an overall site composition of coordinated sloped roofs while avoiding idiosyncratic and inappropriate dormer rooflines.



Granville Island's adaptive re-use of heritage structures includes programming in the form of retail, restaurants, and galleries. Architecturally, the buildings were energized through apertures, colour, lighting and exposed structure.



ARCHITECTURE

Materials and Finishes

Materials chosen for the new developments should be kept simple, consistent with the “working harbour front character” and mindful to not overshadow the integrity of existing buildings. Similar to the form of the new developments, the selection of materials should reference a nautical theme. As many successful waterfront buildings cite characteristics of naval architecture, such as weighted hull, lightened superstructure, masts, cables, etc., so to shall the choice of materials.

The scope of materials and their arrangement within the composition should embody a contemporary feel that communicates to the warehouse-character. Suggested materials include corrugated galvanized metal siding coupled with a roofing material that coincides with the siding. Structural members could be composed of recycled timber and any selection of masonry should be native to the area with its application demarcated to the structures lower level evoking the weighted hulls of ships. Use of transparent and/or translucent materials are encouraged in order to enhance the quality of the interior spaces of the new buildings as well as to promote a contemporary aesthetic and porous nature to the composition as a whole.



LANDSCAPE DESIGN

Landscape Types

The Hamilton West Harbour landscape is comprised of five general typologies, reflecting the various character areas of the western waterfront. Understanding and clarifying the extents and interplay between these landscape types will generally help clarify the structure and reading of the waterfront.

Bluff

The most significant topographic landscape type is the bluff located at the southern edge of the harbour. A strong physical prominence in the landscape, the bluff effectively demarcates and makes distinct the residential area on the top of the bluff with that of the lower harbour. The considerable grade difference naturally promotes views of the harbour while giving a unique character to the shallow harbour below. The bluff is predominantly covered with naturalized vegetation with views through the trees to the harbour. This naturalized vegetation should be promoted and enhanced with native species plantings. When viewed from across or along the harbour, this natural feature provides a foreground to the skyline of the City. The continuity of this feature should be encouraged wherever possible, balancing the desire for views with landscape continuity, much like a smaller version of the Niagara Escarpment.

Pastoral Park

Bayfront Park and Pier 4 Park are excellent examples of parks that are pastoral in nature. An idyllic landscape image is set upon users with a soft palette of sizeable trees, vast green open spaces and a large body of water. The users experience the many natural composed views through a series of curving paths. A retreat from the urban environment, every attempt should be made to keep these parks pastoral in appearance through a frequent and thorough maintenance program.

Piers and Port Lands

The marine piers and working port lands are the last vestiges of the working waterfront. Largely hard-edged and paved, these spaces have an industrial character with large flexible spaces which have historically had different uses depending on the time of the year. Reinterpreted as public realm, it is important to retain the materials and functional character of these work-a-day spaces in contrast with natural and pastoral park landscapes. Characteristically, these types of waterfront spaces have cobble plazas, boardwalk and timber structure, practical metal furnishings and vegetation at the margins or in containers.



-  recreational trails
-  connecting trails
-  aquatic habitat
-  pastoral park
-  piers and port lands
-  bluff

Streets and Corridors

Street trees will help define the character of the streets or trails within the West Harbour. Native trees with a proven track record in urban conditions are recommended as a first choice. A diverse range of tree species planted throughout the corridors will create a strong landscape character. A row of trees along these routes will highlight their greater significance within the larger network.



PUBLIC ART

Program and Selection Process

In order to further establish a cohesive, visual connectivity along the main “Waterfront Trail” several locations have been designated for public art installations. A number of locations have been identified for major installations including;

- Pier 4 Park
- a fountain at the foot of Bayfront park
- a historically sensitive installation adjacent to the “rumrunners” heritage site
- significant public art piece at the foot of James Street

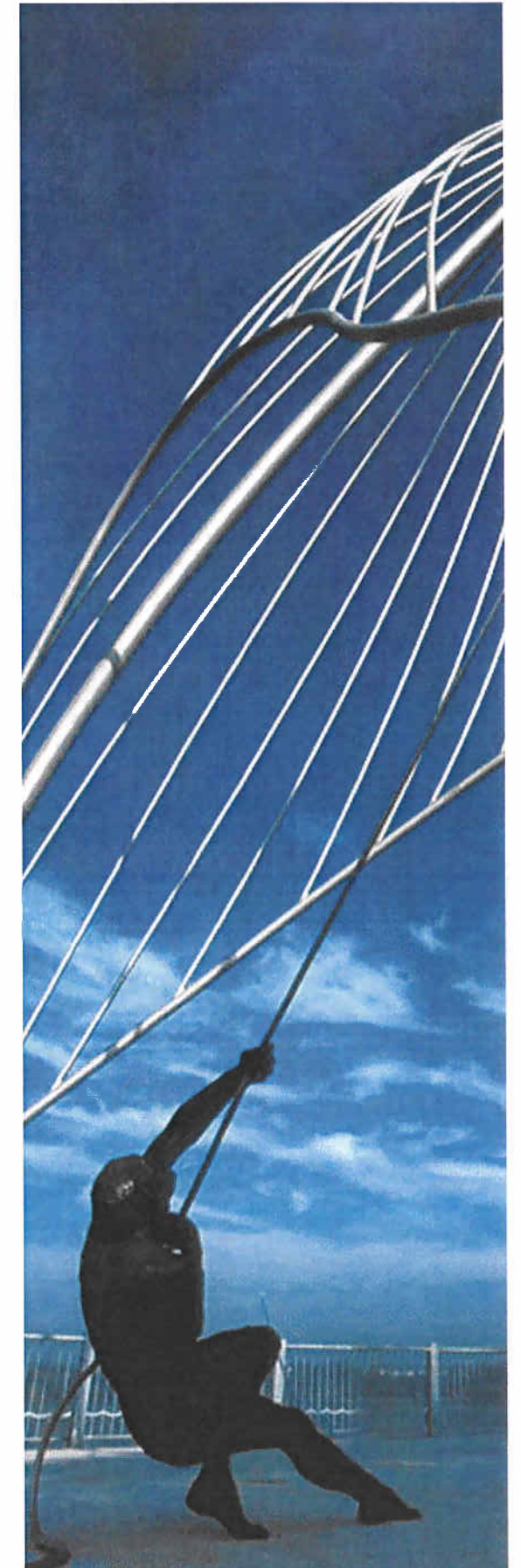
These installations will add to the vibrant and festive atmosphere of these significant locations while improving their aesthetic quality. They will serve as nodes for social and intimate activities, as well as to establish visual trail marks helping to connect the precincts along the harbour. Smaller installations can be envisioned along

the waterfront trail intended to create a linear public art corridor which further enrich the users experience along this more trail. To add to the overall vibrancy of the area, public art can also be integrated with the construction of buildings and infrastructure throughout the site.

The process for selection of individual pieces of public art shall be in accordance with the principles set out in the City of Hamilton Public Art Master Plan. This requires that public art projects evolve openly through public consultation and stakeholder juries to ensure that the art selected is reflective of the community, the qualities of the site as a whole and will be in keeping with the goals of this plan.



- proposed public art sites
- existing public art sites
- proposed linear public art corridor



AQUATIC HABITAT

General Policies and Principles

The new habitat created beneath the boardwalks could include installation of riverstone shoals, woody habitat structures and boulder clusters intended to provide complex habitat, improved feeding opportunities, and cover for fish.

Similar installations elsewhere have resulted in increased populations of native fish species, such as northern pike. Enhancements beneath the boardwalks would also complement planned shoreline improvements, where vertical hardened shorelines will be softened with more gently sloping habitat with mixed substrates and aquatic vegetation. These shoreline improvements will benefit spawning fish such as largemouth bass, and numerous other species that utilize these important near-shore areas.

Since the 1930's, in North America, habitat structures have been added to aquatic systems when natural habitat is perceived to be lacking or insufficient to attract fish and increase productivity. The West Harbour in Hamilton has been significantly altered over the course of time due to the pressures of development, port expansion, industry, transportation and recreation resulting in significant environmental degradation. Fish habitat enhancement measures in this area will promote improvements to native fish populations, and will benefit the productivity in the West Harbour area.



WATER'S EDGE

“The boardwalk was the great pathway to imagined pleasures. A kind of yellow-brick road that stretched as far as the eye could see and where you could feel the excitement as the boards warmed your feet in the summer sun.”

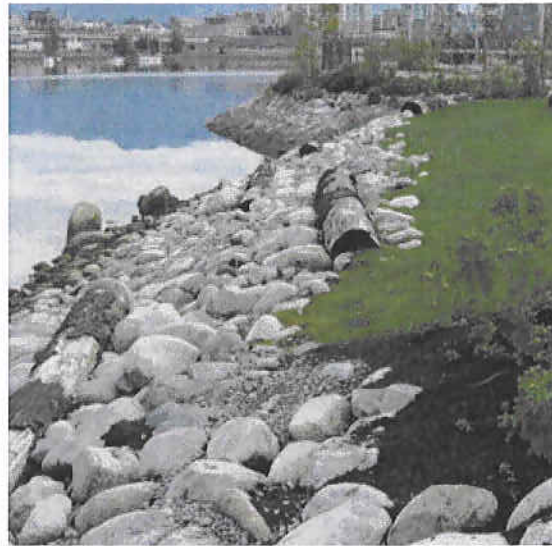
-David Crombie, former Mayor of Toronto (recalling the former boardwalk at Sunnyside - from 'I Remember Sunnyside: The Rise & Fall of a Magical Era' by Mike Filey)

Boardwalks / Structural Decks

The water's edge promenade is public and continuous. A generous six meter dimension for the boardwalk is essential to establish the appropriate metropolitan scale of the lakefront. A hardwood timber construction is highly recommended in order to reduce regular maintenance. Planks should be laid in a straightforward pattern held up by steel piles and a concrete understructure. A galvanized steel toe rail and moorings will mark the edge of the walk.

Naturalized Shoreline

A rip rap shoreline is suggested for natural shoreline enhancements. It is made from a variety of rock types, preferably granite or limestone. It will be used mainly to protect the shoreline from erosion but also increase opportunities for fish habitat. Rock sizes should be large enough to allow for recreational fishing.



PAVING PALETTE

Roads, Sidewalks and Trails

The main roads and trails in the West Harbour should be composed of asphalt which would be contained by a concrete curb border where applicable. Asphalt is a very durable and flexible surface material and requires very little maintenance until major repairs or replacements are required. Patterned asphalt is not suggested as it can be difficult for in-line skaters, strollers, wheelchairs and cyclists. Where possible, shading of the trail with trees should be considered as this will help reduce radiant heat on the trails during summer months. A continuous border for the recreational trails composed of the same unit paving in the main basin is also recommended to improve cohesiveness across the precinct.

In areas where sidewalks occur, a poured in place concrete sidewalk with broom finish is recommended. Cross walks at road and trail intersections should also be composed of poured in place concrete paving. This will give a visual prominence to the movement of pedestrians and recreational users.

Full height barrier curbs are recommended for sidewalks and recreational trails, providing separation between motor vehicles and recreational users. Periodic drop curbs will be required for accessibility.

Feature Areas

The feature areas along the water's edge route will fulfill important civic functions and will be heavily visited as people are naturally drawn to the water's edge. This area is the primary east-west pedestrian movement corridor and plaza space within the main basin precinct and must therefore have a complementary, high quality of materials and refinement.

The treatment of paving materials to be considered are sound, robust quality precast concrete pavers that have a hidden horizontal and vertical self-locking system which distributes loads evenly.



Design Guidelines

LIGHTING

Lighting on the waterfront reinforces the overall plan. It is part of the comprehensive vision, an important element in defining both the identity of the nighttime and experience of the waterfront.

Existing Family of Lights

The existing lighting throughout the Hamilton West Harbour is successful both in defining the waterfront district and providing a marine aesthetic. Only minor improvements to the fixture are suggested. As fixtures require replacement, a dark-sky friendly fixture should be selected to mitigate light pollution and conserve energy.



Accent Lighting

Accent lighting can transform the west harbour at night by illuminating highlighted special structures such as the pedestrian bridges, slip ends, public art and the terraced seating into dramatic focal points. Ambient lighting provided by pedestrian scale lights and poles are also essential for safety along the boardwalks, paths, stairs and walkways.



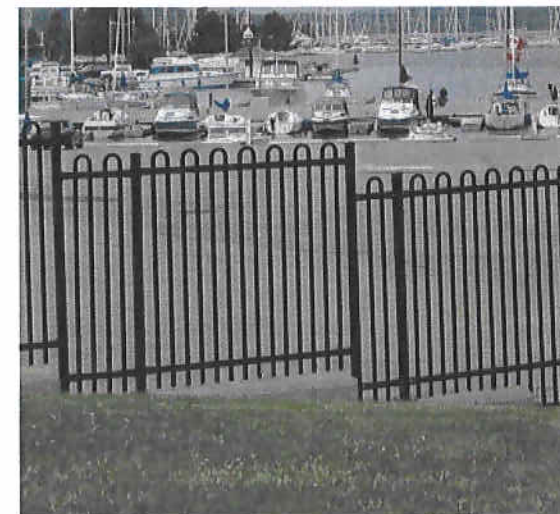
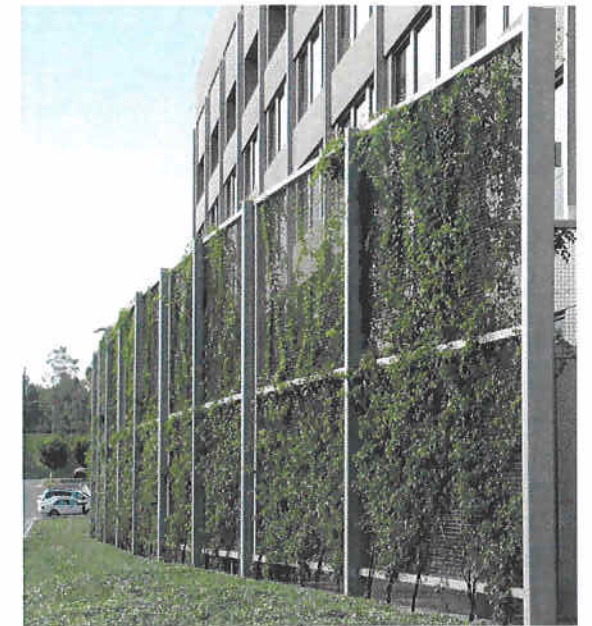
FENCING AND RAILINGS

In many cases the existing fencing and railings in the West Harbour compliment their surroundings and provide appropriate barriers and screening. The simple galvanized metal railings and fences found on site are a desired aesthetic that should be maintained and promoted throughout the site.

Any new or proposed fencing should not limit actual or visual access to the waters edge, except where necessary for safety or security. Fencing material visible from publicly accessible areas should compliment surrounding architectural materials. Chain link fencing is inappropriate in all cases.

Screening

Screening is necessary where privacy is a concern to the yacht clubs. Fencing if used as screening should be solid, visually attractive and should include vegetation. Vegetation and landscaping should form a complete year-round opaque screen.



FURNITURE

A current survey of waterfront furnishings and details reveals a consistent repetition of furniture items. The simplified family of furnishings provides a clear identity across the waterfront.

Over time, existing furnishings and details should be replaced by a consistent contemporary family of furnishings within a phasing process that incrementally transforms the West Harbour into a coherent district within realistic capital budgets and timeframes.

Benches

A simple contemporary bench is suggested for the West Harbour. The benches should be chosen for their strength, durability, engineering expertise and the quality of their corrosion resistant, fade resistant and UV resistant finishes. Benches should be complimentary to other furnishings such as waste and recycling receptacles.

Waste and Recycling Containers

The current contemporary waste and recycling containers are desirable. When necessary, existing containers should be replaced with new receptacles that are consistent and similar in contemporary design and simplicity.



Existing site furniture



Examples of contemporary benches

SIGNAGE AND WAYFINDING

Signage and Wayfinding

Currently, the signage and wayfinding along the West Harbour lacks coherence and uniformity. Multiple styles, multiple design variations constructed in multiple materials creates a fragmented image along the waterfront today.

To reinforce a clear and coherent image across the West Harbour, signage should be simple and sophisticated in design and appearance with a strong relationship to the palette of materials and finishes of the overall master plan vision, while visual clutter and random placement of signage shall be avoided.

Rather, signage should be conceived as integrated elements within the public realm to maintain consistency in the West Harbour. A coordinated signage scheme should be developed with an overall graphic language and palette

of materials consistent with other elements in the public realm.

Repetition of signage elements is essential; the same basic elements should be used throughout the district and aim to include:

- Good legibility for all users, including elderly, children and people with all levels of mobility;
- High contrasts and tactile elements for people who are visually impaired;
- Community information boards should be considered at transit stops and other high-volume areas;
- Signage elements should be carefully placed within the public realm so that they are not presented as obstacles in public space.



Existing signage and wayfinding



Examples of possible signage and wayfinding

DESIGN REVIEW

Design Review

Design excellence will play a key role in creating a more liveable and beautiful waterfront. What is built on the waterfront, from the buildings to streets to parks and public art, will set new standards for architecture and public space across the city. The design of proposed developments and the public realm will implement the vision of the master plan and help Hamilton's West Harbour achieve its cultural, social, economic and environmental objectives.

In all cases where changes are proposed for the Hamilton West Harbour it is crucial to have a design review. A design review panel will provide expert, professional, unbiased advice to the City of Hamilton on proposed developments on the waterfront. The panel should act as an independent advisory body to the city, in order to assist in achieving high quality architecture, urban design, landscape architecture, and environmental sustainability in development. The panel will be advisory and in no way replace the City of Hamilton's regulatory approvals process.

The panel should be comprised of a mix of design professionals including architects, landscape architects, urban designers, engineers with sustainability expertise and individuals with expertise in planning. The members must be registered members in good standing with their respective professional

associations. The panel should be selected by Council, as per other City boards and agencies. A terms of reference and policy/procedural guidelines should also be established.

Projects to receive critical input and advice would include buildings, structures, parks and public realm projects. Anyone of these should come before the design review panel a minimum of three times. This is to ensure a fair, consistent, and transparent process.

