



DOWNTOWN TOMORROW

Linking Orillia's Core to the Water

**FINAL
DRAFT**

09 17 2012

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Acknowledgements





Section 1

The Project

The Heart of Orillia

Downtowns are important places. They are the historic and symbolic heart of a community and a reflection of its image, pride and prosperity. They are the meeting place for the entire city, where people of all backgrounds come together to celebrate and share common experiences. For an increasing number of people, they are also a desirable place to live. An attractive and active downtown makes a positive statement about a city, whereas a struggling downtown sends a negative message to prospective residents, businesses and investors. A healthy city needs a healthy downtown.



A successful downtown

- ... creates a positive image for the city
- ... supports a range of employment opportunities
- ... acts as an incubator for new businesses
- ... supports a strong tax base
- ... enhances the qualities of surrounding neighbourhoods
- ... is a significant tourism destination
- ... allows growth to occur in an efficient and sustainable way
- ... is the meeting place for the city
- ... instills community pride



Introduction

Orillia is a city rich with history, cultural attractions and natural beauty. It offers its citizens a high quality of life and visitors much to see and do. The City's numerous assets, including the historic main street, Soldiers' Memorial Hospital, its waterfront parks and trails, and its brand new library, are the envy of other small Ontario cities. It is also growing faster than most cities of its size.

Orillia is at a pivotal point in its evolution. It continues to grow mostly outward, toward the west. In the meantime, economic activity in the City's core has declined, resulting in vacant land, vacant buildings and neighbourhoods in need of repair. There is a recognition that Orillia's growth should be more balanced—that public and private “city-building” investments need to focus on enhancing Downtown. Besides bringing more vitality to the core, future investments should address a fundamental problem—the lack of connectivity between Downtown and Lake Couchiching.

Attracting more people and development to the core have long been City objectives. On-going investments in Centennial Park, Couchiching Beach Park, Veterans' Memorial Park and the Port of Orillia have ensured the waterfront remains a major attraction. The Opera House, the library, the Farmers' Market and the City's many summer festivals draw thousands of people to the historic core. Attracting new development, however, has proven to be a greater challenge.

Recognizing the need to improve or rebuild parts of Downtown, the City of Orillia initiated Downtown Tomorrow: Linking Orillia's Core to the Waterfront. Building on previous planning initiatives, Downtown Tomorrow looked comprehensively at the City's core but also strategically. A team of consultants was retained to work with the City's Project Team, comprised of senior City staff and leaders in the business community. The consultant team was led by Urban Strategies Inc. (urban planning and design) and included McSweeney and Associates (economic development), Studio Lab (branding) and Pearson-McQuaig (civil engineering).

This document is the culmination of an intensive and consultative planning process that reached out to all Orillians. It sets out a broad, long-term vision for Downtown and guidelines for both private development and public investment. Equally important, it also identifies strategic initiatives to be pursued over the next 20 years, including “priority actions” for the next 2-5 years.



The Planning Process

The Downtown Tomorrow project commenced in January 2012 with a series of interviews by the consultant team with City staff and various Downtown “stakeholders”, including representatives of the business, arts and boating communities, Lakehead University and Georgian College, and Soldiers’ Memorial Hospital, as well as key landowners. The purpose of the interviews was to understand background information and discuss the issues and opportunities facing Downtown.

The consultant team also reviewed a number of documents relevant to Downtown. In particular, the following documents informed the team’s findings and recommendations:

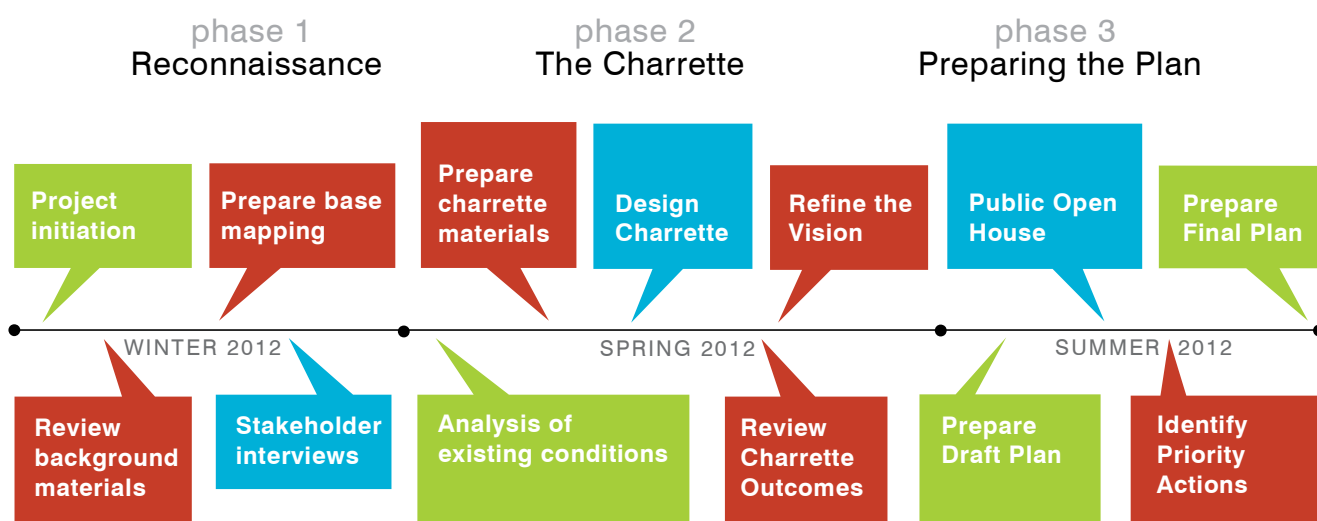
- Orillia Waterfront Framework Plan (2003)
- A Cultural Plan for the City of Orillia (2005)
- Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006, 2012 update)
- City of Orillia Economic Development Strategy (2008)
- Centennial and Couchiching Beach Park Master Plan (2010)
- Official Plan Review Directions Report (2008)
- Orillia Official Plan (2010) and Zoning By-law
- Downtown Orillia Management Board Strategic Plan (2009)

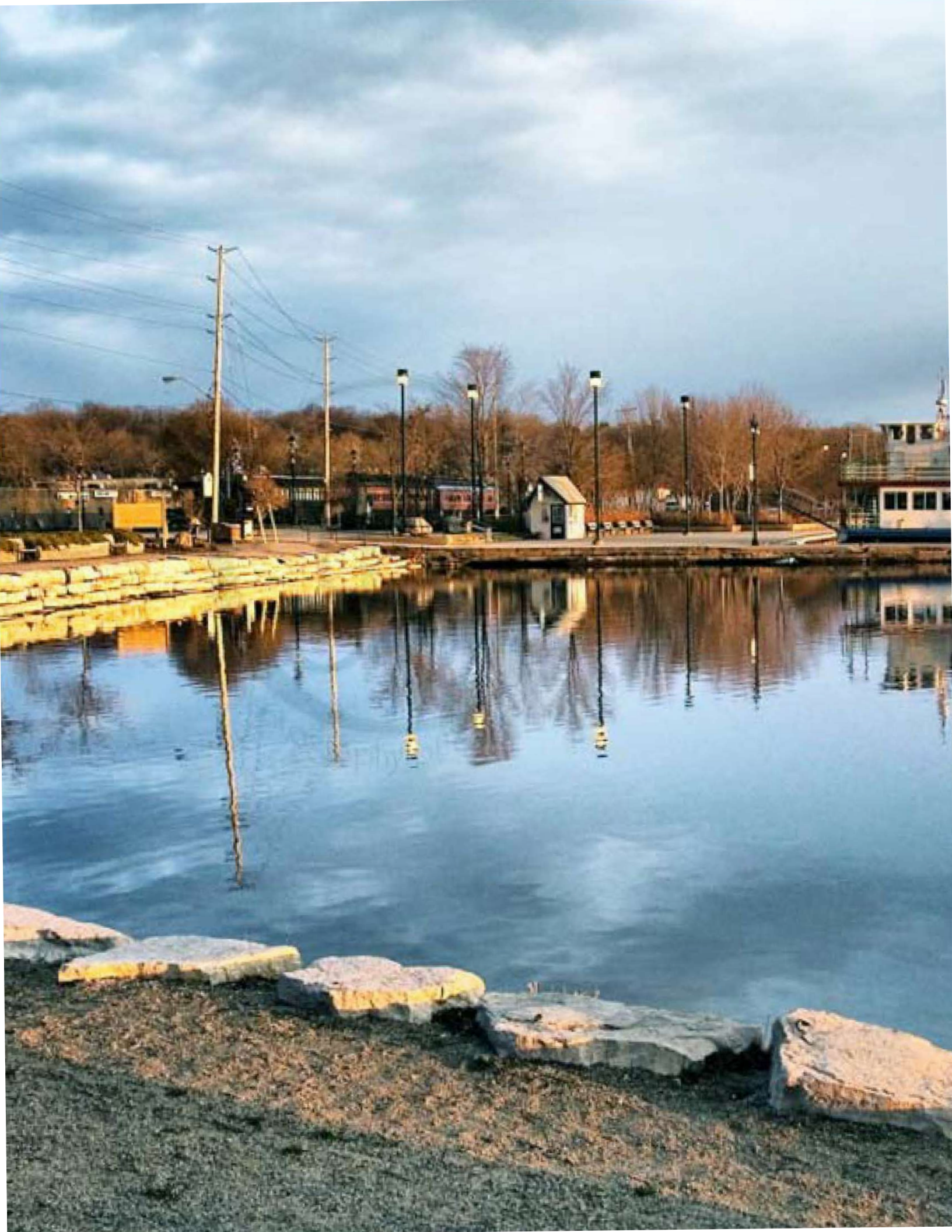
- Orillia Heritage Conservation District Study (2010) and Plan (2012)
- Downtown Orillia Parking Study (2011)
- Orillia Draft Active Transportation Plan (2011)
- Orillia Arts District – Collection of Ideas (2011)
- Proposal for the Leacock Centre for Arts, Culture and Community at Lakehead University-Orillia (2012)

Also in Phase 1 of the study, the team analyzed land use and physical conditions in the City’s core, the retail environment, and the brand the City uses to promote Downtown.

Phase 2 of the project comprised a four-day Design Charrette, held in May 2012, which engaged the Orillia community in discussions about Downtown and in a design exercise using a three-dimensional model. The Charrette and its outcomes are described in Section 3 of this document.

The vision and strategic directions that emerged from the Charrette were subsequently reviewed and refined before forming the basis for this document.



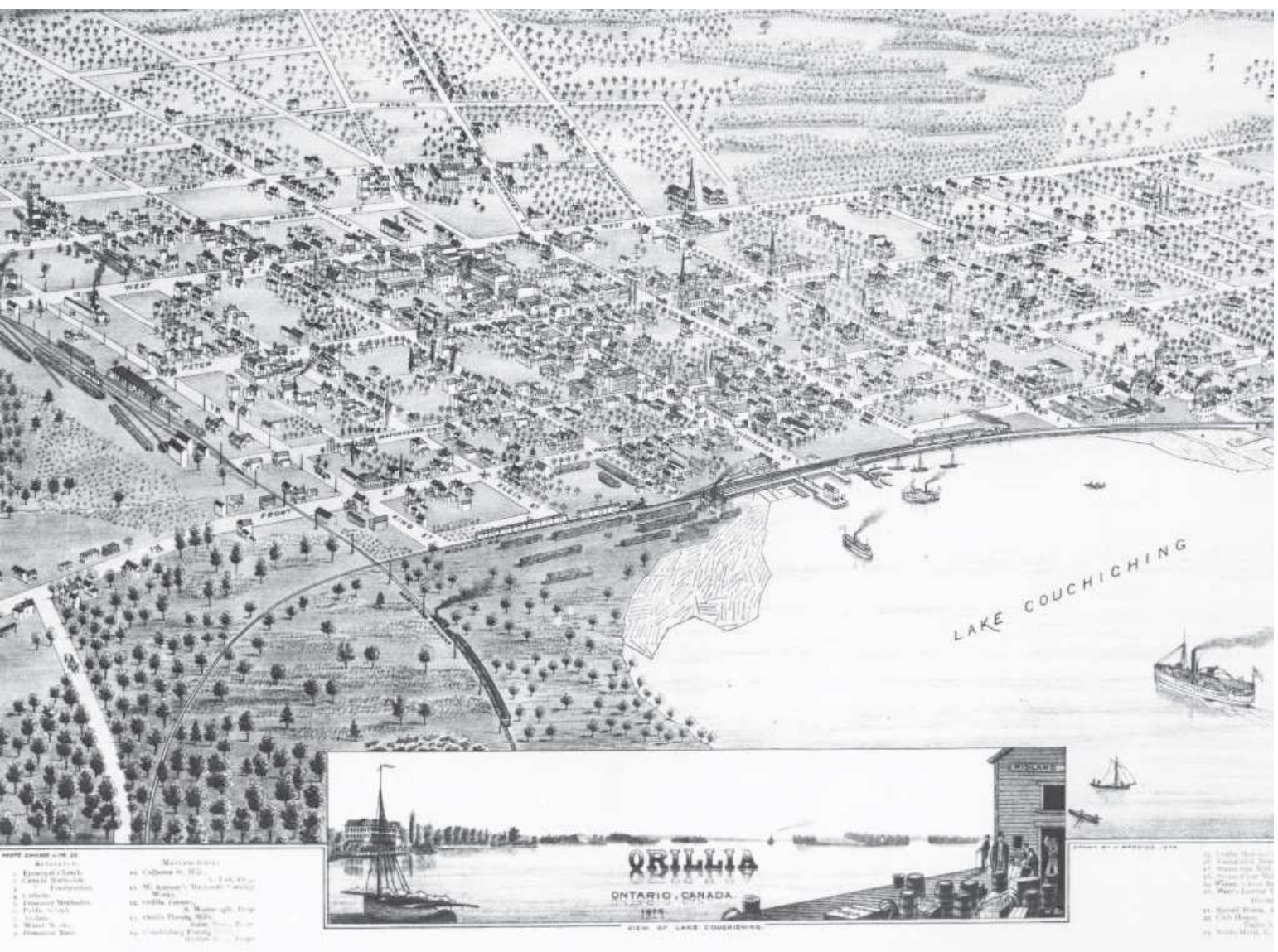




Section 2

The Opportunities

Since Orillia was permanently settled almost 200 years ago, it has gone through many changes as an industrial, commercial and tourism hub, always seizing opportunities and promoting progress. Looking ahead, the City needs to respond to the combination of global and local trends, as well as provincial policies, that are reshaping the role and form of Ontario's small cities. It also needs to address specific challenges and opportunities brought about by Orillia's unique history, natural setting and built fabric. This Section summarizes the context for change in the City's core, setting the stage for a re-imagining of its potential.



2.1 City at a Crossroads

In a globalized economy, Canada's wealth is increasingly concentrated in its major cities and resource-rich regions. To prosper, smaller cities need to closely link themselves to nearby larger cities, leverage their natural and cultural assets, and diversify the services they offer to the region around them.

With so many Ontario towns and small cities struggling to redefine their economies, the competition for people, institutions and investments is intense. Fortunately, Orillia is in an enviable position given its institutional assets and more importantly its geography.

Orillia is at the crossroads of Highways 11 and 12 and on the Trent-Severn Waterway, a strategic location within Ontario's vast cottage country. To the south is the fast-growing, Toronto-centred region known as the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which includes Barrie. Several million people are within a two-hour drive of Orillia. As more urban dwellers to the south seek an escape, a place to

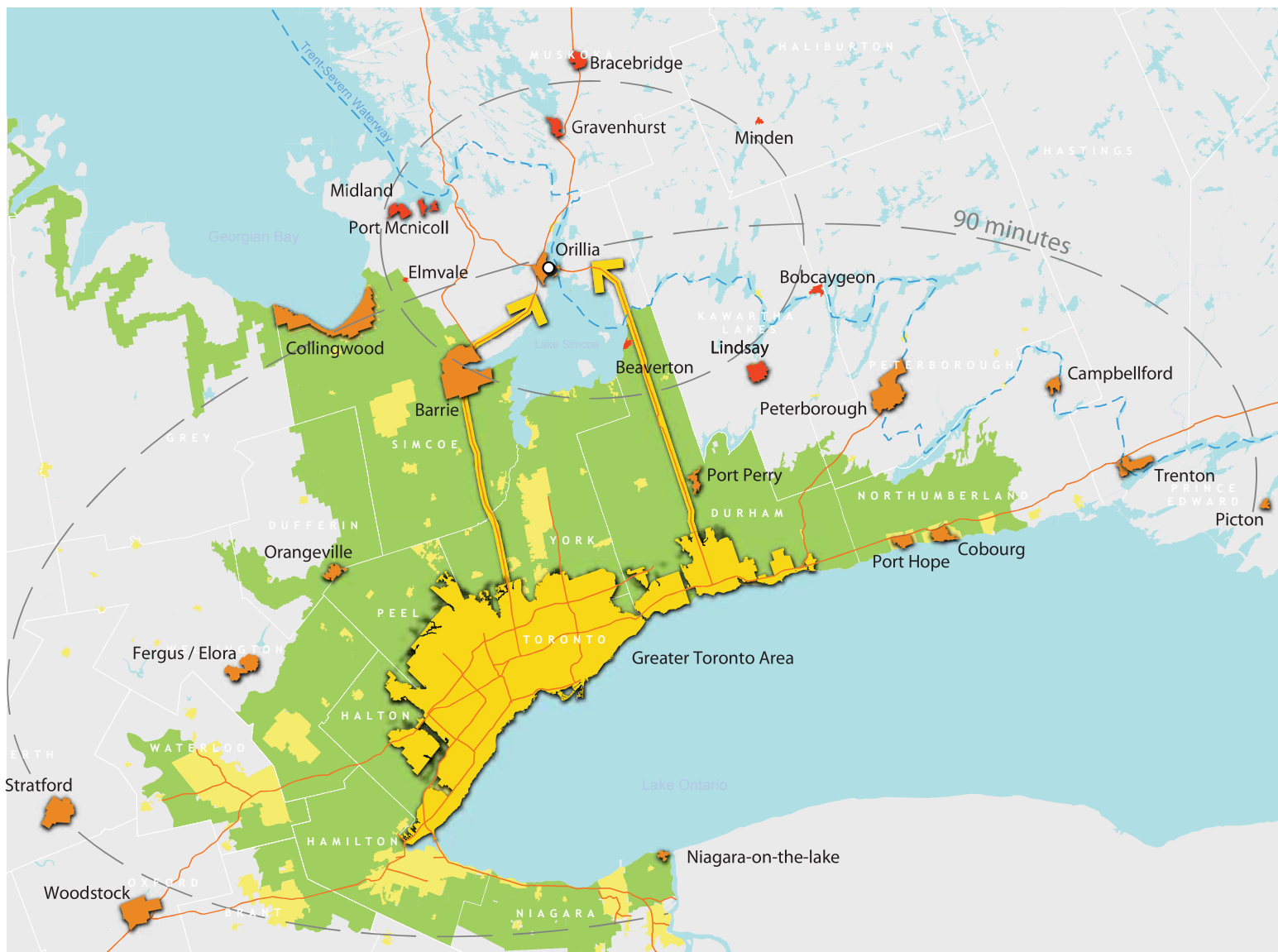


Figure 1: Southern Ontario Context



Colbourn, Ontario



Stratford, Ontario



Collingwood, Ontario



Port Perry, Ontario

retire or just a smaller community for their business or education, communities like Orillia stand to benefit. The challenge for Orillia is to change the perception among many in Southern Ontario that the City is a gateway to cottage country by enhancing and promoting itself as a unique and special destination.

To ensure optimal growth that enhances the City's prosperity, Orillia can take lessons from popular destinations like Stratford, Collingwood, Cobourg and Picton. High-quality redevelopment, cultural programming and recreational assets have made these communities among the most desirable in the province to live and visit. In each of these places, the key to success has been

a series of public and private investments in the heart of the City—Downtown.

To better promote Orillia to the outside world and attract people and investment to Downtown, the City has recognized the need to review the City's brand, i.e., the concept used to drive the perceptions of the City. Discussions during the Downtown Tomorrow process confirmed that, while elements of the current brand remain relevant, there is an opportunity to update and enrich it. The discussions held during the Design Charrette, summarized in Section 3, also confirmed that Downtown is an important signifier of the values and character of the City.

2.2

A Growing and Evolving City

Orillia has grown steadily outward from Downtown for almost 200 years, and the City is projected to add almost 10,000 more people by 2031. Patterns of growth, however, are expected to be different from the pattern of suburbanization that has prevailed in North America for the past several decades.

The intent is to create more efficient, compact and sustainable cities that are less reliant on cars for moving around and more reliant on public transit and active transportation (e.g., walking and cycling). Under the Province's Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, which encompasses Orillia, suburban "greenfield" development will be balanced with "intensification", i.e., new development within the built-up area of a city. Starting in 2015, 40% of residential development in Orillia must occur within its defined built boundary. This could mean that 1,500 to 2,000

residential units, housing for up to 4,000 people, will be built within the existing developed city over the next 20 years.

Orillia's recently updated Official Plan targets most of the City's future intensification to Downtown, specifically to the former industrial and commercial lands south of the historic core. The boundary of Downtown has been enlarged to take in this area, and land use and built form policies encourage residential intensification. The overall capacity for population growth

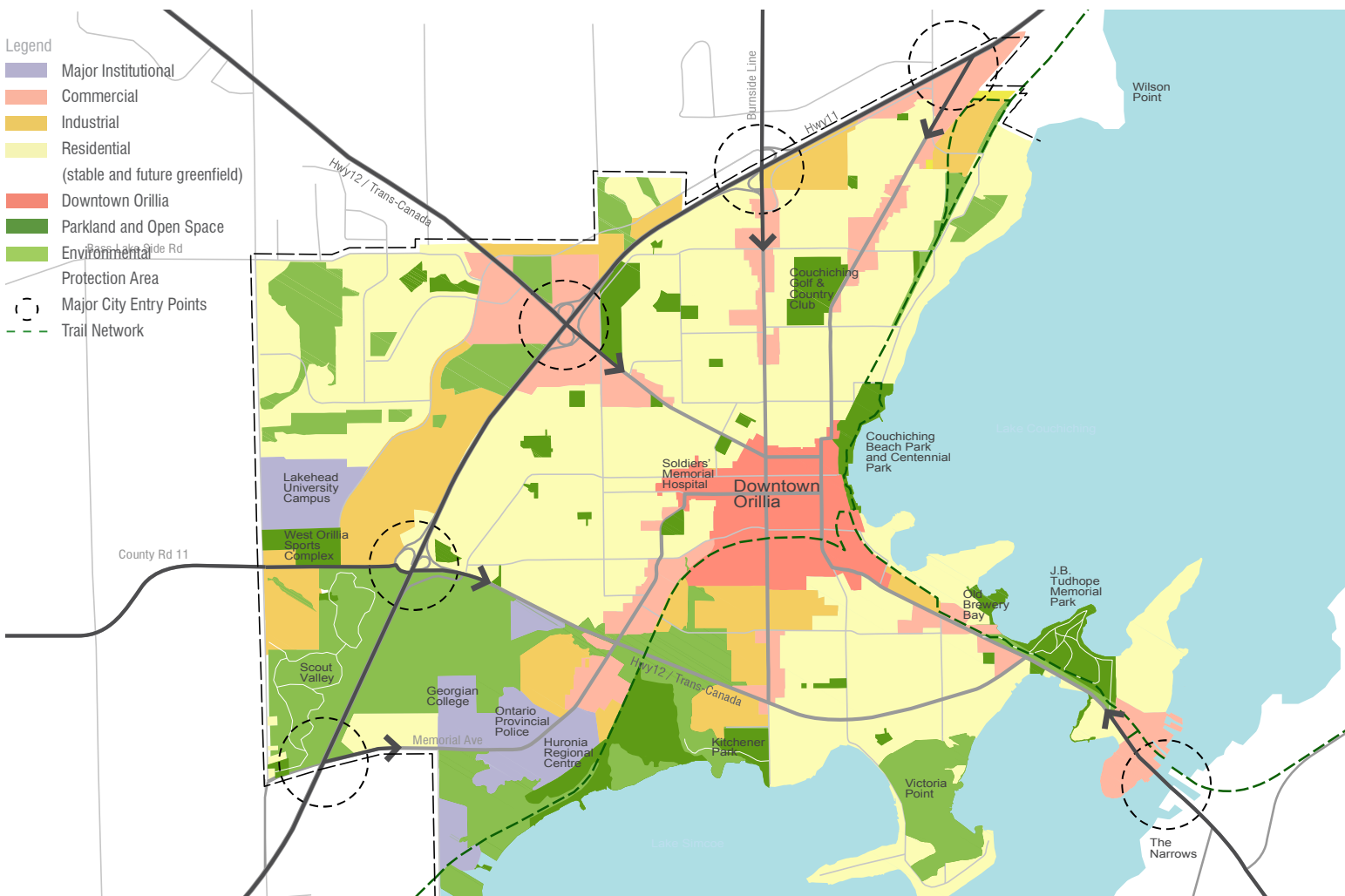
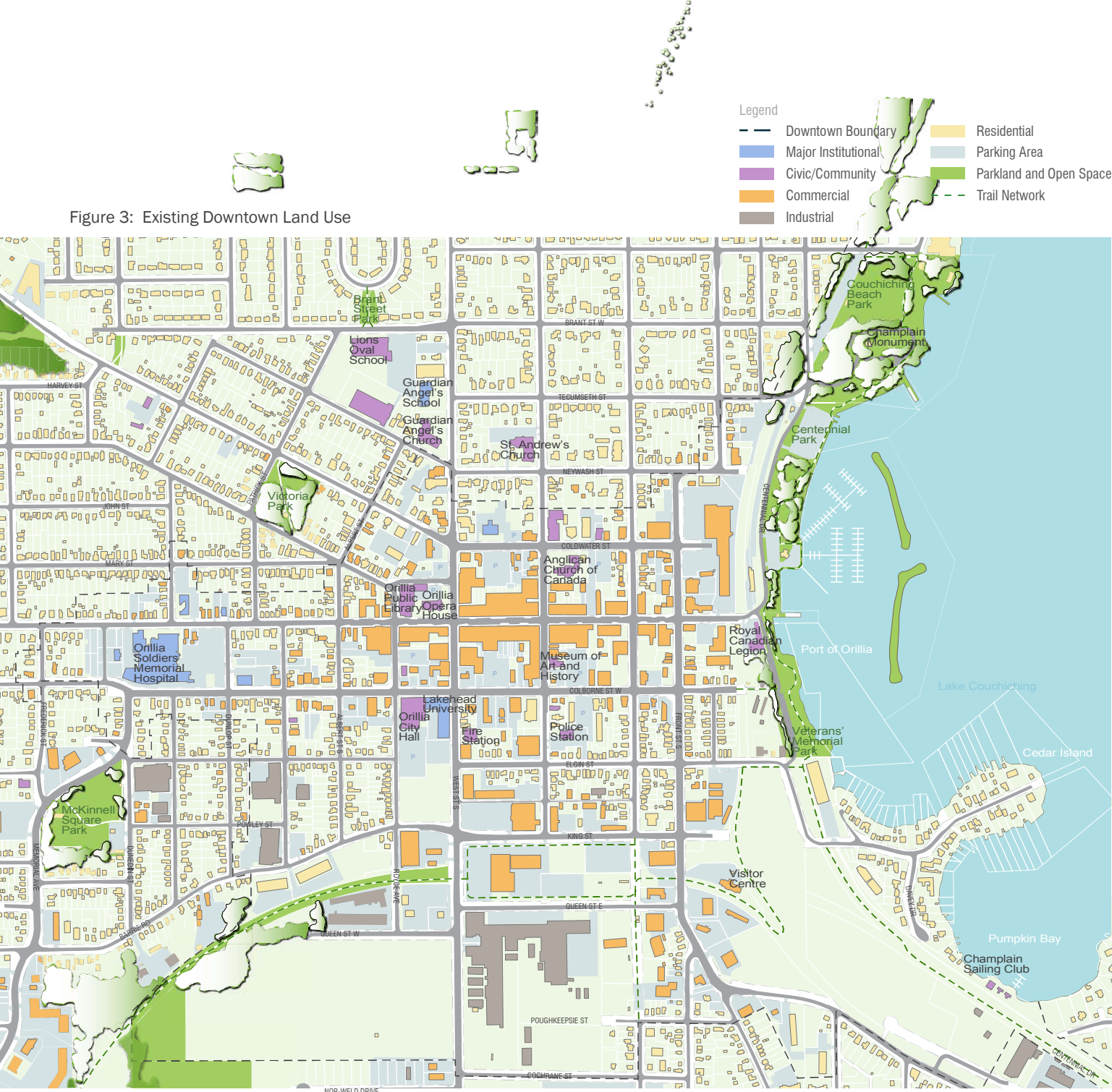


Figure 2: Orillia's Urban Structure



Downtown is estimated to be 4,500 people. Some new residents may occupy empty upper floors in older buildings, but most of the growth will be accommodated in new apartment buildings and other compact forms of housing, such as townhomes.

It's important to recognize that growth Downtown will not automatically happen because provincial and municipal policies say it must. Developers have to be attracted to underutilized land and buildings in the core, and neighbourhoods need to be planned. In addition to new housing, Downtown will require new parks and other amenities as well as strong connections to

existing attractions, including the Lake Couchiching waterfront, to succeed as a liveable, complete community.

As Downtown is planned for the people that live there and move there, it also should be improved for all Orillians. It is after all the civic and cultural heart of the City, central to all residents, a reasonably short drive away from where they live (and, for some, within walking or cycling distance). New institutions, City facilities and cultural venues that serve the entire City should be located Downtown to unite the community, maximize vitality and support businesses.

2.3

Orillia's Main Street

The heart of Downtown is Mississauga Street East, even as its role as a commercial hub continues to be challenged by the Orillia Square Mall and recent big box developments, both in Orillia and Barrie. The City's historic main street can't compete with the retail offerings and convenience of malls and power centres, but it can succeed as a shopping and dining destination by offering a unique retail experience that includes a range of specialty stores and restaurants.



The economic opportunities Downtown are rooted in four co-dependent and fundamental keys to success:

- growing the customer base;
- improving the physical environment;
- tuning up the business mix; and,
- ongoing programming and management of Downtown.

Growing the customer base will provide the critical mass required to support an upgrading of the merchandise mix. It involves growing the daytime population by supporting the retention and expansion of employment in Downtown. In this regard, growth of the hospital, the new police services building and an increased academic presence, i.e., Lakehead University and Georgian College, may be critical. Just as important will be a growing residential population Downtown.

While there are a high number of fine storefronts and building facades today, many could use substantial improvements in keeping with the heritage character of Downtown. More consistency and better quality in terms of architecture and signage will help to make Downtown a more desirable location for new businesses, which will gradually fill in the existing detrimental gaps in storefronts. Improvements to private property should be supported by a general upgrading of the public portion of the streetscape.

With selective marketing, a growing customer base, and private and public investment in the physical qualities of Downtown, the merchandise mix can be significantly enhanced and pedestrian traffic will increase. Higher quality shops will displace less desirable uses currently filling spaces at very low rents. The goal should be fewer beauty shops, tattoo parlours, pizza places and dollar stores. Professional offices and financial services in ground floor spaces should also be discouraged. There is an opportunity to see distinctive retail themes emerge, such as food, creativity and recreation, which will reinforce Downtown as a destination. By packaging cultural events with dining and/or shopping, people will spend more time Downtown.

Finally, inconsistency in store hours Downtown is a significant issue. This discourages lingering and frustrates the casual shopper. Mall hours in the Downtown are not necessary, but better co-ordination of opening and closing times through the week should be a priority.

2.4

Downtown's Strengths

Downtown Orillia has many assets. Below are the key elements which should be protected and built upon as Downtown grows and improves.

- 1 Waterfront Parkland and Trails.** Centennial Park and Couchiching Beach Park are the envy of many cities. They offer residents and visitors a place to gather, celebrate, play and relax. The Port of Orillia activates the water's edge and supports tourism during the summer months.
- 2 Stable, Healthy Neighbourhoods.** The attractive neighbourhoods within downtown and immediately to the north and west contribute to its setting and ensure it has daily customers and activity.
- 3 Mississauga Street.** The City's historic main street is a charming, well-maintained shopping street offering a good mix of independent shops and services. The street itself often becomes a gathering space, with festivals and events taking over the street.
- 4 Vibrant Arts and Culture Scene.** The series of artistic and creative venues centred on Peter Street, together with the Opera House, showcase Orillia's outstanding local talent.
- 5 Important Civic Uses.** City Hall, the remarkable new library, the courthouse and the OPP Detachment anchor Downtown as the City's civic centre, keeping it populated with workers and daily visitors.
- 6 Soldiers' Memorial Hospital.** One of the City's largest employers, the recently expanded hospital anchors the west end of Downtown and draws patients from throughout the surrounding region and points beyond.
- 7 Lakehead University.** Lakehead's presence Downtown is a significant contributor to vitality and has the potential to catalyze broader renewal and job creation.
- 8 Heritage Buildings.** Downtown is home to an impressive collection of heritage buildings, including the Opera House, Orillia Central School, the Sir Samuel Steele Building and many churches. The proposed Heritage Conservation District recognizes the importance of the ensemble of historic buildings along Mississauga Street.
- 9 Farmers' Market.** Orillia has one of the longest running markets in Ontario, providing residents and visitors access to local, healthy foods.
- 10 A Walkable Pattern.** The grid pattern of streets and blocks Downtown make it generally easy to get around by foot.



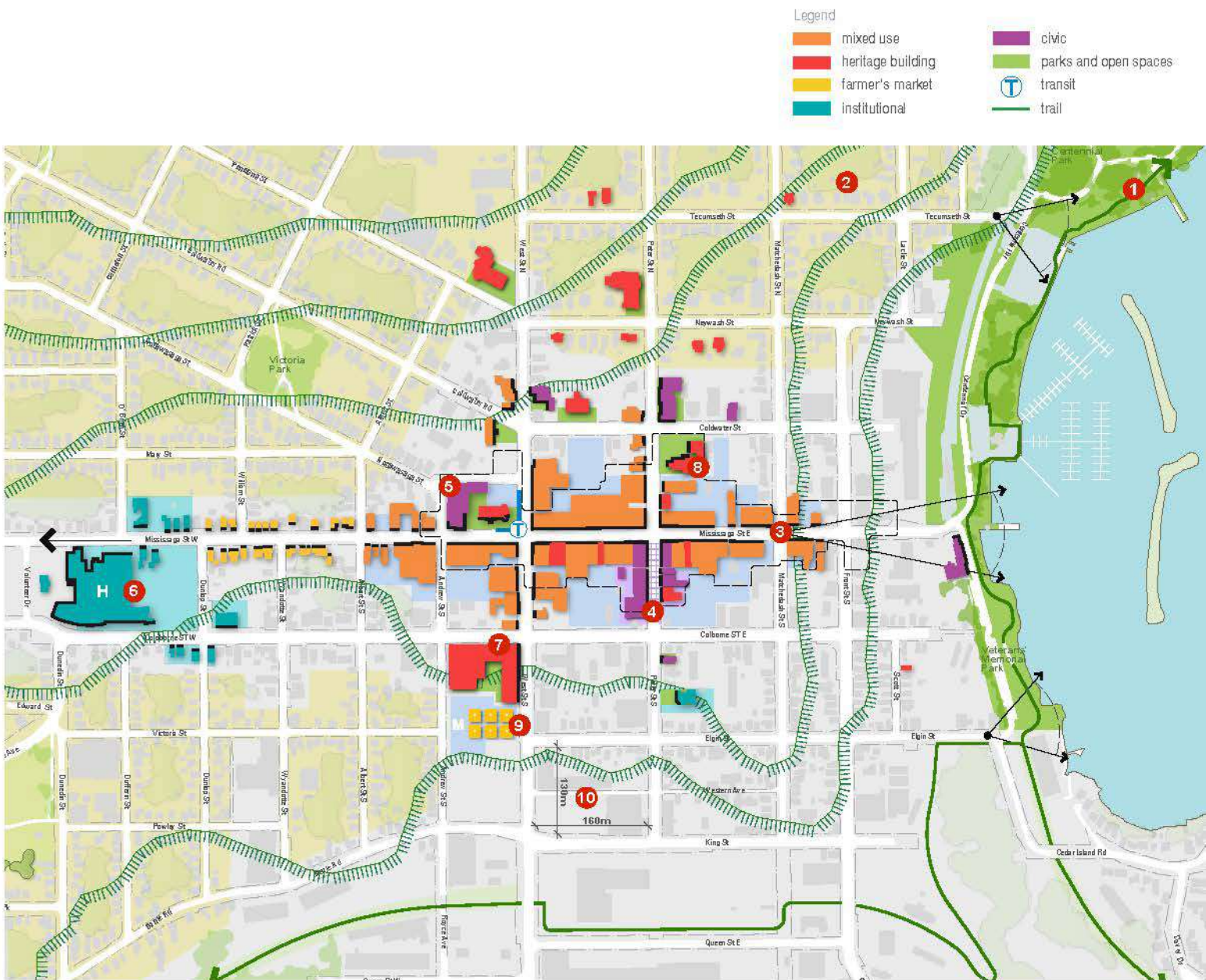


Figure 4: Downtown's Key Strengths



2.5

Summary of Physical Opportunities

There is room for improvement Downtown. Below are key challenges to address and opportunities addressed by the Downtown Tomorrow Plan.

- 1 Waterfront Parking.** Parking lots compete with green space on the waterfront, and a better solution for boat trailer parking is needed.
- 2 The gap between the heart of downtown and the lakefront.** Because the waterfront was once occupied by industrial uses and railways, development in the rest of Downtown turned its back to the lake. With the tracks and industries gone comes the opportunity to put a new face on Downtown and improve connections to and along the lakefront.
- 3 Coldwater Street and Colborne Street.** These two streets function as service roads, providing access to the many existing parking lots. However, they are important routes and future links to the waterfront, and should have more attractive streetscapes.
- 4 Vacant Storefronts and Buildings.** There are a number of vacant storefronts along Mississauga Street that need to be occupied and vacant buildings elsewhere Downtown to be re-used or redeveloped.
- 5 Central School.** This one-of-a-kind historic building has the potential to take on a new life as a cultural or educational facility.
- 6 Institutional Growth.** Universities and colleges can have a powerful revitalizing effect on downtowns. Lakehead University's presence in the core, and opportunities to accommodate Georgian College, should be promoted. A new City Hall might create such an opportunity.
- 7 Missing Connections.** The disappearance of the railways also makes possible new physical and visual connections to the lake and to future development to the south.
- 8 Vacant Former Industrial Lands.** Orillia has a proud industrial history, but the physical legacies are large tracts of vacant land that negatively affect the image of Downtown. The opportunity and challenge is to transform the south side with new housing and other development supported by neighbourhood infrastructure and green connections between the lake and environmental areas to the west.
- 9 Neighbourhood Repair.** Residential pockets south of the historic core are in need of reinvestment or, in the case of some properties, redevelopment.
- 10 Link to Tudhope Park.** Downtown and the larger city would benefit from improved trail and open space connections from the core to Brewery Bay and Tudhope Park.



Legend

- vacant/underutilized buildings
- underutilized waterfront lands
- existing city hall
- potential waterfront access points
- i information centre
- neighbourhood fabric
- employment
- parking
- trail

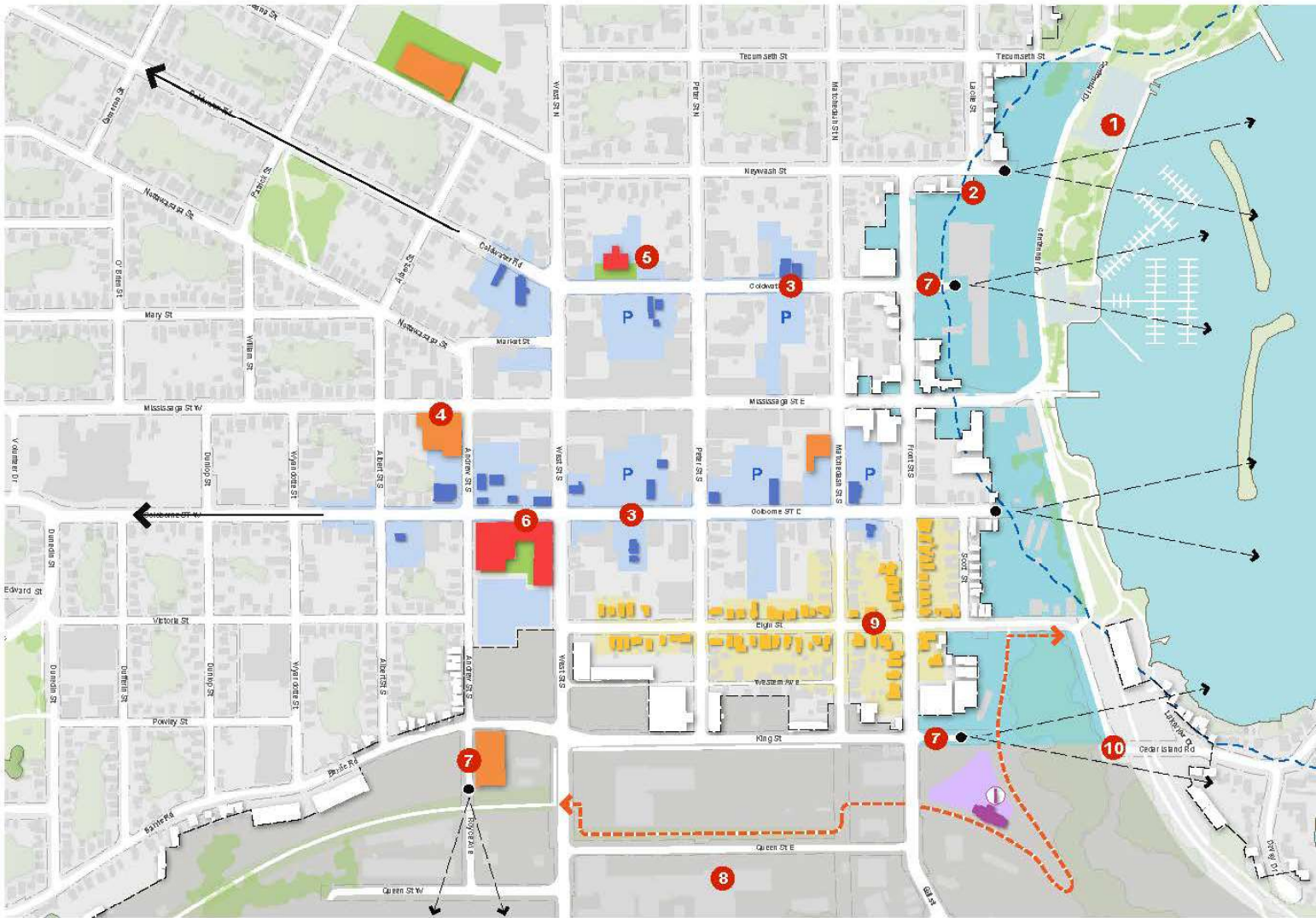


Figure 5: Physical Opportunities







Section 3

The Charrette

What is a charrette? A charrette is an intense process that brings a community together to plan and design a place. The goal is to identify opportunities, address challenges and craft solutions in an open, collaborative forum.



In May 2012, a four-day “Design Charrette” was held to openly discuss the opportunities for Downtown and, with input from the community, develop a physical vision for its long-term future.

The Design Charrette kicked off with a “Great Places Forum”. Five notable Canadian designers and “place-makers” presented inspiring examples of successful places, from the perspectives of landscape architecture, trail design, economic development, architecture and branding. Day two of the charrette began with the study team sharing its thoughts on the strengths, challenges and potential of Downtown Orillia (summarized in the previous section). This was followed by a series of discussions, facilitated by the study team and the guest speakers from the Great Places Forum.

3.1

Reconsidering Orillia's Brand

The successful growth and development of the Downtown will depend in part on Orillia's brand—the authentic concepts based on the City's values, culture and physical environment that are used to promote the City and attract new residents, visitors, businesses and investors. Planned changes in the core can inform the City's brand and future development should reflect it.

The first session on the second day of the charrette engaged all participants in a discussion about Orillia's brand. Four provocative scenarios were presented, each of which emphasized a different set of ideas and options that could potentially define the character and culture of Orillia:

- Scenario 1 was titled “Sunshine Sketches of Small Town Ontario” and pictured a place with urban sophistication and small town friendliness that celebrates its culture, history and relationship to nature.
- Scenario 2, “Magic of Mariposa”, emphasized Orillia's artistic pedigree and envisaged a more vibrant cultural scene and a weaving of the arts into many aspects of the City.
- Scenario 3, “The Future is Fitness”, saw Orillia's institutional, recreational and natural assets providing a springboard for creating one of the healthiest cities in Canada.
- Scenario 4, “Blue Water Project”, imagined an Orillia as an important hub in the knowledge economy, where institutions and entrepreneurs focus on water technologies and where environmental sustainability is showcased.

Overall, there was an understanding among the participants that Scenario 1 represented Orillia as it is generally perceived today and that Scenarios 2-4 contained potential future developments. Both Scenarios 2 and 3 had elements that appealed to different parts of the audience. Both were consistent with the audience's sense of potential growth for Orillia, and neither seemed incongruous with the audience's current perception of the City. The fourth scenario was not based in a current reality and required more imagination to embrace. While the idea of a new business venture was attractive to many, the audience was skeptical that Scenario 4 was a realistic ambition for Orillia at this time.

The discussion of the scenarios was the beginning of a process for updating the City's brand. In the meantime, by revealing community values and aspirations, it also provided important context for developing the long-term vision for Downtown.



3.2

Focus Sessions

Six focus sessions on day two of the Charrette allowed groups of participants to discuss their ideas for particular aspects of Downtown. Below is a summary of key suggestions that emerged from each session.

Living Downtown

- More affordable rental housing is needed
- Shabby housing in parts of Downtown discourages development
- Front-Elgin Street area could be improved as an affordable neighbourhood or become a gallery district
- Land assembly is needed—available properties are too small for most developers
- Incentives will be needed for upper floor conversions
- Heights of new apartment buildings should step down toward the lake
- Unit sizes could be smaller in the Downtown, to encourage outside living
- A mix of housing is needed—for seniors, families and students
- Don't "oversign" Downtown—encourage discoveries
- More green space will be vital—to structure growth and provide amenities

Shopping and Dining Downtown

- Beautification and better lighting should be ongoing improvements
- Downtown needs more restaurants and food stores
- The arts and culture scene are key to attracting and entertaining shoppers
- Street theatre and temporary galleries should be encouraged
- A hotel/conference centre on the waterfront would have a huge impact on businesses
- Encourage equipment rental places on the waterfront
- The farmers' market should move back to Market Square
- Clearer signs to parking are needed
- Consider free parking policy for evenings and weekends

Mobility Downtown

- Downtown sidewalks need refurbishing and widening
- Trails and bike routes through Downtown are needed
- Popular trails should be wider
- Bike racks and benches are needed
- Consider transit shuttle for tourists and seniors
- Approaches / entrances to Downtown need improvement
- The extension of Coldwater Road will be a major improvement to access
- More trees everywhere will encourage walking



Playing and Gathering Downtown

- More space is needed for festivals and other gatherings
- The waterfront needs more dining options
- Enlarge the pier at Mississauga Street and add vendors
- There is strong demand for more beach volleyball courts
- Pumpkin Bay should be better connected to the parks system
- Urban parks will be needed as the Downtown population increases
- Complement Central School with more green space
- Work toward better linkages to Huronia Regional Centre
- Better signage is needed for park and trail users
- More public washrooms are needed

Culture and Heritage Downtown

- Consider lighting landmark buildings
- Need better retail mix to increase value, which will encourage upper floor conversions
- Need to attract festival-goers who are on the waterfront, e.g., with signs and a trolley
- Directional signage needed
- Move visitor information centre to the waterfront
- Consider Artscape model for Central School
- Hold more mini cultural events—theatre, music
- Enhance Peter Street as arts hub
- Link market experience to cultural events

Learning and Working Downtown

- Expand Lakehead's presence Downtown
- Continue to strengthen connections between hospital, university and college
- Explore shared recreational facility (City and institutions)
- Create a health services corridor to bridge the hospital to the centre of Downtown
- Encourage more office space and artist studios
- Nurture and attract information technology/digital media companies
- Establish a recruitment committee to attract businesses
- Explore potential for a Conference Centre

With the wealth of ideas generated on day two, Urban Strategies used a physical model to develop a vision for Downtown on the third and fourth days of the Charrette. On both days, the community was invited back to view and comment on the emerging design. On day four, an Implementation Session was also held to begin discussing the key initiatives that should be pursued to achieve the vision. Together, the Charrette vision and initiatives provided the basis for the master development concept and implementation strategy described in the next Sections.







Section 4

The Concept

The plan for Downtown Orillia is based on a concept of what the City's core can become over the long term. The "Master Development Concept" described and illustrated in this Section is a direct outcome of the Design Charrette held in May 2012. It reflects the aspirations of Orillians and principles of good urban design.

The concept starts with an overall, principles-based description of the vision and then is broken down into "key components"—areas of Downtown planned for significant change over the next 20 years. Land use and urban design guidelines are outlined for each component to provide direction on how the area should physically evolve.



view of the Downtown concept looking east

4.1

The Long-term Vision

The vision for Downtown Orillia builds on the City's rich heritage and natural setting. It celebrates landmark buildings and valued open spaces and imagines new legacies. It extends the historic "walkable" pattern of streets and blocks to the waterfront. It includes new places to enjoy the lake and Downtown's cultural, recreational and retail amenities.

True to Orillia's progressive spirit, the vision boldly introduces new elements intended to place the City at the vanguard of inventive small cities. It includes a Downtown academic campus for Lakehead University and Georgian College to share. Former industrial lands are replaced by a major new park, new neighbourhoods and a range of recreational facilities.

The vision for Downtown emphasizes connections: Buildings, streets and commercial uses that connect the City's core to

the lakefront. Improved streetscapes and trails that encourage walking and cycling. Environmental and open space links that re-green Downtown and provide a setting for new development.

The Master Development Concept envisions a Downtown where many more thousands of people connect with Orillia's heritage, institutions, businesses and culture. And where people connect with each other.





An Accessible and Inviting Downtown

Whether you're traveling by car, boat or bicycle, Downtown Orillia draws you in. Signage on Highway 11 and Highway 12 tells you that Downtown is a special place and points the way. There is more directional signage along the approach routes of Coldwater Road, Memorial Avenue, Colborne Street, West Street and Atherley Road, and these streets are lined with trees as you approach the core. Once you've arrived, new streets provide frequent views and easy access to the lakefront. A continuous two-lane street along the lake edge, with generous sidewalks and a parallel bike path, has opened up more of the waterfront for public enjoyment.

Visible from land and water, landmark destinations appear at the bottom of Mississauga Street and Coldwater Road. A new pier with a café and concessions visually extends Mississauga into the lake and provides more dock space for tour boats and pleasure craft. At the tourist information centre, near the Port of Orillia, you can rent a bike, kayak or skates (ice or in-line) to explore the area from either side of the shoreline. Signed bike routes and new trail links make cycling Downtown safe and pleasant. With so much more to see and do in Orillia, visitors will want to spend the night at the hotel overlooking Lake Couchiching or one of the smaller boutique accommodations elsewhere Downtown.



A Vibrant and Creative Downtown

Downtown has become not just a place to enjoy for an afternoon or a day or two but also a place to live. Thousands of people have moved to the City's core to be near the lake, the main street, the cultural attractions, the post-secondary schools and the hospital. The streets are alive with people every day and every evening. A mix of restaurants and shops on the ground floors of apartment buildings at the bottom of Mississauga Street has created a new hub of activity day and night. From there, people are drawn up Mississauga Street to experience the heart of Mariposa. On Saturdays, as always, people flock to the Farmers' Market, centred in its historic home.

The full breadth of Orillia's culture is on display as one strolls Mississauga Street. Storefronts offer quality foods, high-end fashion, locally-made crafts and unique dining experiences. A side trip up and down Peter Street confirms Orillia as a destination for artists and art lovers. West of Peter, the fresh food theme of lower Mississauga yields to the City's playful and creative sides. Anchored by the library and the Opera House, this is the place to be entertained and stimulated, or to acquire supplies, equipment and furnishings for your own creative and recreational pursuits. Above the stores, small businesses and artists are at work. Head south on West Street or Andrew Street and you will find yourself among students studying, or taking a break from their studies, at the downtown campus for Lakehead University and Georgian College.



A Healthy and Liveable Downtown



Downtown Orillia is a place to get well, stay healthy and enjoy a high quality of life. Soldiers' Memorial Hospital continues to enhance its facilities, drawing patients and health care professionals from far and wide. There is more housing for those who need long-term care. Innovations in health care are being developed and taught at the two post-secondary institutions. The City is playing its part in supporting healthy lifestyles with its ground-breaking Leisure and Wellness Centre, which supports institutional programs and has helped to catalyze redevelopment Downtown.

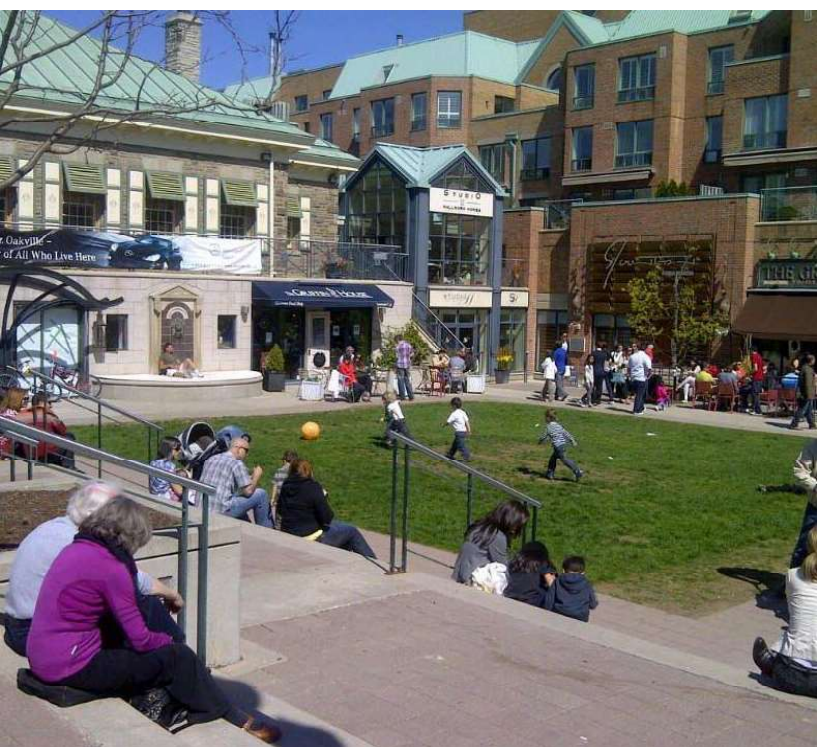
Transforming former industrial sites into new mixed-housing neighbourhoods, besides improving the City's environmental health, has put Orillia on the map of brownfield success stories. Throughout Downtown there are housing options for everyone—high-end and affordable condominiums, rental apartments, live-work units, townhouses and detached homes. Established neighbourhoods in the core have seen significant reinvestment from property owners, with support from the City. New parkland and small gathering spaces complement the major waterfront parks, adding a range of amenities that serve all Orillians.

A Green and Beautiful Downtown



More green spaces and greener streets have brought more beauty to Downtown. A multi-use park on West Street has transformed the image and environment of the core's south edge, establishing a new destination complemented by the nearby Leisure and Wellness Centre. A green corridor parallel to Queen Street, with naturalized landscapes and multi-use trails, links the park to the waterfront and has encouraged neighbourhood development. There is more green space along the waterfront with the relocation of parking areas in Centennial Park. At Pumpkin Bay, boat club members and the general public can launch small sail boats, rowing shells, canoes and kayaks, or just pause to enjoy the view.

Many more trees throughout Downtown, along key streets and in parking lots, have done as much to beautify the core as the new green spaces. The restoration of historic buildings along Mississauga Street East, improved storefronts and signage, and streetscape improvements that allow for more sidewalk activity have together raised the quality of the City's main street to new heights. New development in the core has taken many different forms but has been consistently well designed, respecting and complementing Orillia's historic character. New civic and institutional buildings have added to Downtown's inventory of architectural legacies. The emphasis on design excellence all comes together along the waterfront, where public realm improvements and private development combine to put a new, beautiful face on the City.





view of the Downtown concept looking northwest



view of the Downtown concept looking northeast





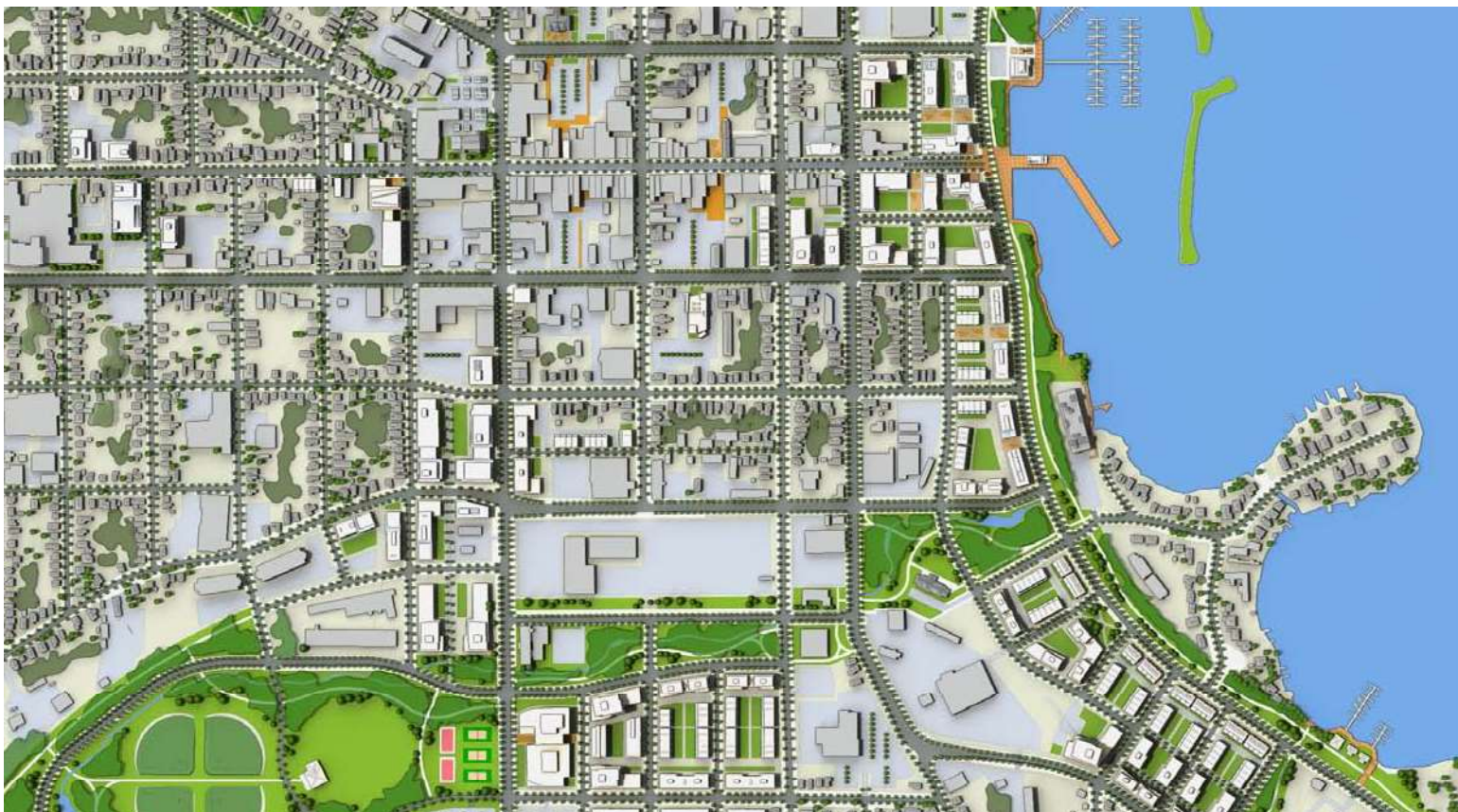
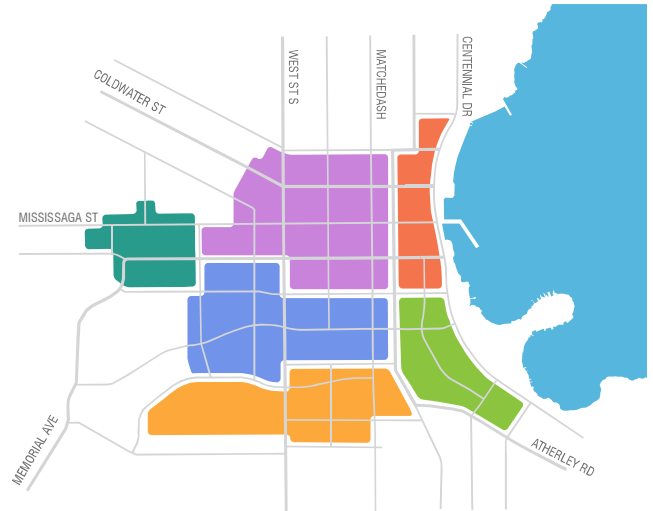


4.2

The Key Components

All areas of Downtown can be expected to undergo some degree of change over the next 20 years. The Master Development Concept focuses on six specific areas where significant change is desired. For the other areas of Downtown, major change is not envisioned and existing plans, policies and zoning remain relevant.

Each of the Key Components of the overall vision comprise both new buildings and public realm improvements. On the following pages, the vision for each component is described and illustrated. To further provide direction on how each area should physically evolve, private realm guidelines addressing matters of land use and urban design are included, as well as general public realm guidelines. The guidelines clarify specific aspects of the concept, such as building heights and streetscape characteristics. They are also intended to ensure that a design-based approach is taken to future projects, with the goal of achieving a high-quality built environment and public realm in all areas of Downtown. In some cases, amendments to the City's Official Plan and Zoning By-law will be required for consistency with the guidelines.



Downtown-at-the-Lake

This is Orillia's front door on Lake Couchiching and pivot point along the waterfront. Changes on the city blocks between Neywash Street and Elgin Street, east of Front Street, will indeed be pivotal to successfully connecting Downtown to the lake. Extensions to Neywash Street, Coldwater Road and Colborne Street will be critical mobility links. More important will be private redevelopment that extends the City's built fabric to a re-aligned Centennial Drive. Development will need to be coordinated with not only the street extensions but also other public realm improvements on the waterfront, including: the extension of, and improvements to, Centennial Drive; relocation of the trunk sewer in the former rail corridor; and the burying of the hydro line. As new development occurs, the rehabilitation of historic homes in the Scott Street neighbourhood should be encouraged.

Private Realm Guidelines:

- Encourage redevelopment with primarily residential and/or hotel uses. Condominium or rental apartments are the most appropriate housing type. Townhouses, either stand-alone or integrated at the base of an apartment building, can be considered on secondary streets.
- Require mixed use development on Mississauga Street—residential, offices or hotel above retail. At the bottom of Mississauga Street East, buildings on both sides of the street should be notched to form two corners of the planned Centennial Square. Retail and restaurant uses should frame the corners and may also extend along Centennial Drive.
- Redevelopment of the north half of the Metro plaza site should retain a grocery store.
- Require buildings to frame and address adjacent streets. Residential parking should be located underground wherever possible. Surface parking lots should be minimized and located at the rear of buildings. Servicing areas should also be located at the rear.
- Building heights along Mississauga Street East should be a minimum of two storeys and a maximum of four, except at Centennial Drive, where buildings at the corner can be up to six storeys.
- Buildings fronting Centennial Drive should be a minimum of three storeys and a maximum of six storeys. Building setbacks should allow for restaurant patios along Centennial Drive.
- Buildings fronting Coldwater Street, Front Street and Colborne Street, located behind new development on Mississauga Street and Centennial Drive, should have a maximum height of eight storeys and should transition to lower heights across from existing houses.

- Building materials should be durable and consistent with the historic character of the Downtown. The use of stone, bricks, decorative concrete and non-coloured glass is appropriate; the use of stucco, vinyl siding or coloured glass is not.
- Mid-block pedestrian connections should be provided.

Public Realm Guidelines:

- The streetscape design for Mississauga Street should be consistent east and west of Front Street.
- A civic open space, Centennial Square, should define the intersection of Mississauga Street and Centennial Drive, straddling both streets. Notched buildings will form the west corners of the square; on the east side, the square should extend to the edge of the lake, which will require extending



view of the Downtown concept looking northwest



the shoreline south of the existing pier. The intersecting streets and the four corners should have a consistent paving treatment, with the streets having no curbs or rolled curbs, so that the square is perceived to be, and can function as, a single, unified space. Most of the time, vehicles will criss-cross the square, leaving the corners for restaurant patios and sitting areas. For special events the streets can be closed, allowing the entire square to be programmed.

- A new, longer pier should extend east from the square, extending the urban experience of Mississauga out into the lake. The pier should be generous in width and accommodate shaded sitting areas, seasonal vendors and potentially a permanent building for vendors.
- The foot of Coldwater Street should also have a special design

treatment that marks it as a gateway to the waterfront. A nautical landmark built in conjunction with a pavilion building should visually terminate the street. The pavilion should house tourist information, marina facilities, potentially a restaurant and seasonal equipment rentals.

- Centennial Drive should be designed to have an urban cross-section with two travel lanes and parallel parking on both sides. The pedestrian zones on both sides should be generous.
- The future extensions of Coldwater Street and Colborne Street should have two travel lanes, parking on both sides and boulevards that accommodate two-metre wide sidewalks and street trees.
- Street trees should be added to Front Street.



Central Core

This area captures the commercial heart of Downtown, and the intent is to generally maintain its historic character. Nevertheless there are opportunities for streetscape improvements and infill development that support businesses and make the area more pedestrian and bicycle friendly. The vision for Mississauga Street includes improved storefronts, more specialty food retailers and boutiques, active upper floors, and a refreshed streetscape. The addition of intimate open space pockets along the street will provide places to sit and display public art. Coldwater Road and Colborne Street also need to be beautified. More intense use of the Central School building, perhaps for arts programming, will bring more vitality to the area, and a new building for the City's police services should enhance Colborne Street. The former car dealership sites on Matchedash Street present a strategic opportunity for residential or "live-work" development.

Private Realm Guidelines:

- Encourage the conversion of upper floors to residential, office and "live-work" space.
- Continue to require retail or public uses on the ground floors of buildings on Mississauga Street. Commercial uses that generate low pedestrian traffic, such as professional offices and personal services, should be discouraged on the ground floor. These uses are more appropriate on the side streets leading to Mississauga, where other retail uses should also be permitted.
- Redevelopment of the former department store kitty-corner to the library for civic or institutional uses, or a mix of retail with residential or offices above, should be encouraged.
- Require all new buildings to frame and address adjacent streets. Parking and servicing areas should not be permitted in front of buildings.
- Private parking should not be required for new or expanded commercial development. Over time, non-residential parking should be consolidated into public parking facilities. Parking for new apartment buildings should be located underground, if possible, or at the rear of the building.
- Building heights in the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) and to the north should be a minimum of two storeys and a maximum of four. Building heights south of the HCD should be a maximum of eight storeys. Buildings above four storeys should provide a height transition to adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods.
- Building improvements and new development in the HCD should adhere to the HCD Guidelines.

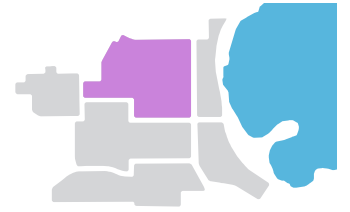
- Outside of the HCD, building materials should be durable and consistent with the historic character of Downtown. The use of stone, bricks, decorative concrete and non-coloured glass is appropriate; the use of stucco, vinyl siding or coloured glass is not.

Public Realm Guidelines:

- Streetscape improvements to Mississauga Street should maintain healthy trees and on-street parking while widening the pedestrian zones and upgrading curbs and the distinctive paving. Further guidance is provided in Section 5.5.
- A landscaped area with seating should be built at the front of the parking lot on Mississauga, between Peter and Matchedash. Opportunities to fill other gaps with small urban squares furnished with moveable tables and chairs should be encouraged.



view of the Downtown concept looking west



- Streetscape improvements to Coldwater Road and Colborne Street should widen the pedestrian zones, provide more room for cyclists and add trees. Further guidance is provided in Section 5.5.
- Artistic elements should be added to the streetscape of Peter Street, between Coldwater and Colborne Streets, such as locally designed paving stones and benches.
- Public laneways and other pedestrian connections between streets and parking lots should have distinctive paving and be well lit.
- Public parking lots should be paved and designed to include landscaped islands, trees, bio-swales and lighting. Permeable paving materials should be considered.



Hospital Precinct

Soldiers' Memorial Hospital is at the heart of this precinct, but it also includes portions of the neighbourhoods that surround it. The hospital will continue to be a driver of change in the area, replacing and adding buildings as it grows and attracting medical offices and other complementary uses. Regular updates to its master plan, prepared in consultation with the City and surrounding communities, should be encouraged. As new development is proposed in the area, the focus should be on using buildings to enhance the streetscapes of Mississauga Street West and Colborne Street, in the process improving pedestrian connections between the hospital and the heart of Downtown.

Private Realm Guidelines:

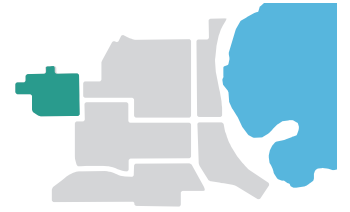
- The area should continue to accommodate a mix of institutional, commercial and residential uses. The existing boundaries of the Hospital Precinct in the Official Plan should be maintained.
- The conversion of houses along Mississauga Street West and Colborne Street to professional office uses should be encouraged.
- Building should frame and address adjacent streets. Parking should not be permitted in front of buildings.
- The demolition of houses to create additional parking lots for the hospital should be discouraged and restricted. The consolidation of parking into a parking structure should be encouraged.
- Buildings should have a minimum height of two storeys and generally a maximum height of four storeys. Taller buildings up to eight storeys may be permitted on the hospital site.

Public Realm Guidelines:

- The streetscape of Mississauga Street West should be improved in concert with improvements east of West Street. The improvements should seek to increase the width of the pedestrian zone, replace and upgrade the distinctive paving, and add trees (see Section 5.5).
- The streetscape of Colborne Street should be improved in concert with improvements east of West Street. The improvements should seek to increase the width of the boulevards, reduce the impact of private driveways and add trees (see Section 5.5).



view of the Downtown concept looking northeast



Elgin Precinct

The proposed Elgin Precinct is anchored by the Tudhope Factory building. The current uses in the historic building—City Hall, Lakehead University's Downtown facilities and apartments—provide clues about how this part of Downtown should evolve. Containing a number of vacant sites and vacant buildings, the precinct has the potential to become a mixed-use campus with more academic facilities and housing for students and others. As redevelopment occurs south of the Tudhope building, along West Street, Andrew Street and Royce Avenue, the historic core of Downtown will be better connected to West Street Park and the future Queen Street Neighbourhood.

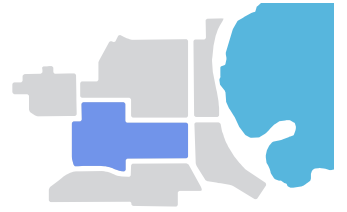
Private Realm Guidelines:

- The precinct should accommodate a broad mix of uses, including institutional, residential, office and convenience commercial. Public land should be retained for institutional uses.
- Future development on the Tudhope Block, between Colborne Street and Barrie Road, should be configured to support a campus environment. Buildings should address the adjacent streets while also framing internal courtyards. The impacts of surface parking and servicing areas should be minimized.
- Buildings should have a minimum height of two storeys and generally a maximum height of four storeys. Residential buildings of up to eight storeys north of Barrie Road, and up to twelve storeys south of Barrie Road, may be permitted in strategic locations where it has been demonstrated that such buildings will contribute positively to the public realm and the overall character of the area.
- Buildings above four storeys should provide a height transition to adjacent low-rise neighbourhoods.
- To ensure taller buildings have a slender profile, the maximum floorplate for portions of buildings above the eighth storey should be restricted to generally 1,000 square metres.
- Parking should be located underground, where possible, in above-ground structures designed to look like buildings, or in small surface lots at the rear of buildings.

Public Realm Guidelines:

- A mid-block local street or mews should link Victoria Street to Elgin Street.
- Andrew Street and Royce Avenue should be linked, and a grid network of local streets and/or mews should structure redevelopment south of Barrie Road.
- Trees should be added to the streetscape of West Street.





Queen Street Neighbourhood

The former industrial sites south of Queen Street provide another opportunity for a new Downtown neighbourhood with a mix of housing and potentially compatible employment uses. The area is also an appropriate location for the proposed Leisure and Wellness Centre. This community will have easy access to the waterfront but a stronger relationship to the proposed West Street Park. A landscaped corridor along Queen Street will also provide amenities for the neighbourhood. Informed by the guidelines below, a secondary plan should be prepared for this neighbourhood and the Waterfront Neighbourhood.

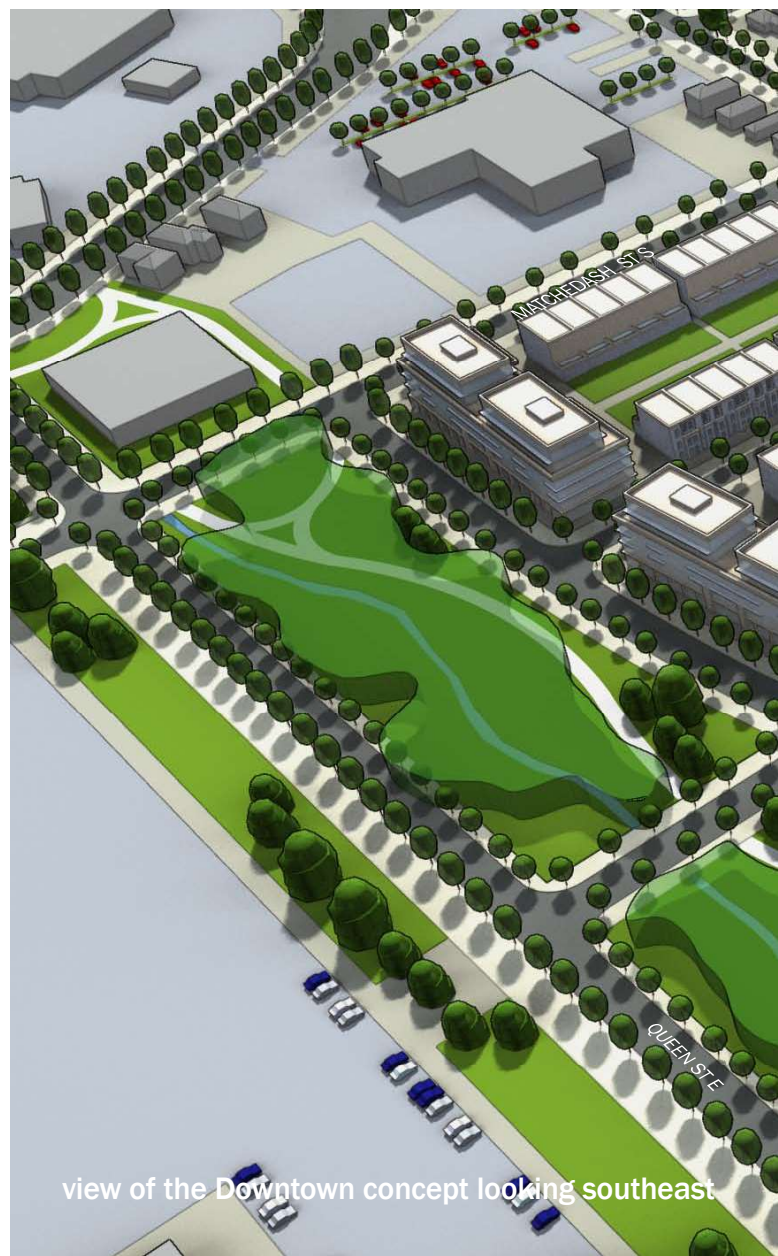
Private Realm Guidelines:

- The neighbourhood should be primarily residential, but office, institutional and/or convenience commercial uses are appropriate on West Street. South of Poughkeepsie Street, clean and quiet employment uses in well-designed buildings are also appropriate.
- A grid pattern of local public streets linked to Queen Street and Cochrane Street should provide the framework for phased development.
- There should be a diversity of housing options in the neighbourhood, including condominium or freehold townhouses and condominium and rental apartments with units of varying sizes.
- Buildings should have a minimum height of two storeys and generally a maximum height of four storeys. Buildings of up to twelve storeys, however, may be permitted in strategic locations where it has been demonstrated that such buildings will contribute positively to the public realm and the overall character of the neighbourhood.
- To ensure taller buildings have a slender profile, the maximum floorplate for portions of buildings above the eighth storey should be restricted to generally 1,000 square metres.
- Parking for apartment buildings should be located at the rear or underground, if possible. Single garages and front yard parking for one vehicle may be permitted for townhouses.

Public Realm Guidelines:

- Matchedash Street and Poughkeepsie Street should be extended through the future neighbourhood.
- Queen Street should be integrated into the design for West Street Park. The potential to realign and extend it across West Street, with a new name, should be considered.
- Local streets should have a right-of-way width of generally 17-19 metres.

- West Street Park should be programmed and designed to serve the entire City with a range of outdoor recreational facilities as well as non-programmed open space. It should also include a naturalized landscape that incorporates and enhances Ben's Ditch. The design and maintenance of the park should demonstrate the highest standards of environmental sustainability.
- The Queen Street green corridor between West Street and the extension of Matchedash Street should contain naturalized landscaping, a multi-use trail, a playground, seating, and elements that interpret the area's natural and industrial heritage.
- Trees should be added to the streetscapes of West Street and Queen Street.



view of the Downtown concept looking southeast



Waterfront Neighbourhood

The development of a new neighbourhood between Veterans' Memorial Park and Pumpkin Bay will add significantly more residents to Downtown and improve access to the waterfront. The area is constrained by environmental conditions and active commercial uses on Atherley Road and Front Street. The extension of Centennial Drive to Forest Avenue as well as the extension of other streets such as King Street, Millard Street and Moffat Street will help improve connectivity in the area and provide additional access to the waterfront. Public green spaces, including a central park that envelops the former train station and channels water through the site, will enhance the setting for development. Indeed, the opportunity to restore elements of the wetland historically located in the area should be explored. Informed by the guidelines below, a secondary plan should be prepared for this neighbourhood and the Queen Street Neighbourhood.

Private Realm Guidelines:

- A grid pattern of local public streets linked to Front Street, Atherley Road and the planned extension of Centennial Drive should provide the framework for phased development.
- There should be a diversity of housing options in the neighbourhood, including condominium or freehold townhouses and condominium and rental apartments with units of varying sizes.
- Commercial uses catering to the local neighbourhood should be encouraged on Atherley Road, preferably on the ground floor of residential buildings.
- North of King Street, buildings along the extension of Centennial Drive should have a minimum height of three storeys and a maximum height of six storeys.
- South of King Street, buildings along the extension of Centennial Drive should have a minimum height of two storeys and a maximum height of four storeys.
- Away from the Centennial Drive extension, building heights may transition up to a maximum height of eight storeys.
- Parking for housing fronting the Centennial Drive extension and all apartment buildings should be located at the rear or underground, if possible. Single garages and front yard parking for one vehicle may be permitted for townhouses fronting local streets.

Public Realm Guidelines:

- Local streets should have a right-of-way width of generally 20 metres.

- The proposed central park south of King Street should incorporate wetland features that help to manage stormwater. The park should contain elements that interpret the area's natural and industrial heritage.
- Following relocation of the tourist information centre and inter-city bus terminal, the former railway station should be considered for re-use as a community facility.
- Parkland should buffer the neighbourhood from the transformer station near Pumpkin Bay and smaller open spaces, with playgrounds and other facilities, should be integrated into the design of the community.
- Trees should be added to the streetscapes of Atherley Road and Front Street.



view of the Downtown concept looking west





1859



FRESH PASTA MEATBALLS ITALIAN SAUSAGE LASAGNA

PIZZA DESSERTS CAPE LATTE CA



Section 5

The Strategy

The Goals

A plan needs a vision, but it also needs goals and an implementation strategy. The long-term vision and concept for Orillia's Downtown are supported by seven overarching goals. The key to achieving the vision is to pursue strategic initiatives that support these goals. As the City and others work to implement the plan, the goals will help in evaluating proposed projects and should be used to monitor the success of the plan.

1. Increase the residential population Downtown
2. Reinforce Downtown as a civic and institutional hub
3. Celebrate Downtown's cultural heritage and activity
4. Enhance the shopping and dining experience Downtown
5. Improve connectivity and streetscapes Downtown
6. Create new spaces Downtown for playing, gathering and relaxing
7. Promote Orillia and enhance the visitor experience



The Initiatives

This Section describes 33 strategic initiatives to be pursued over the next 20 years. They are grouped according to the goal with which they are most directly associated; however, all of the projects support multiple goals directly or indirectly.

The City will be responsible for implementing many but not all of the initiatives. Some will require leadership and support from institutions, landowners or the business community, and many will involve partnerships among key stakeholders.

The initiatives that comprise the Downtown Strategy are not the only projects to be pursued in the next 20 years. Inevitably new opportunities will arise and new initiatives will be proposed that are consistent with the vision and goals for Downtown. The 33 initiatives described here respond to active proposals and opportunities discussed during the Downtown Tomorrow process. Implementing most if not all of them will be vital to achieving the full potential of Orillia's core as a place to live, work, learn, shop, play and visit.



Increase the residential population

- 01 Private Waterfront Development
- 02 Upper-storey Residential Conversions
- 03 Neighbourhood Improvements
- 04 South Core Secondary Plan

Reinforce Downtown as a civic and institutional hub

- 05 OPP Detachment Building
- 06 Leisure and Wellness Centre *
- 07 Shared Academic Facilities
- 08 Soldiers' Memorial Hospital Improvements
- 09 City Hall Relocation *

Celebrate Downtown's cultural heritage and activity

- 10 Heritage Conservation District Plan
- 11 Farmers' Market Relocation
- 12 Leacock Centre for the Arts *
- 13 Living, working and Event Space for Artists *

Enhance the shopping and dining experience

- 14 Additional Specialty Retailers
- 15 Coordination of Shopping Hours
- 16 Storefront Improvements and Restoration
- 17 Extension of Retail Experience to Waterfront

Improve connectivity and streetscapes

- 18 Mississauga Street Enhancements
- 19 Beautification of Key Entry Streets
- 20 Extension and Redesign of Centennial Drive
- 21 New Streets to the Waterfront
- 22 Downtown Bicycle Network

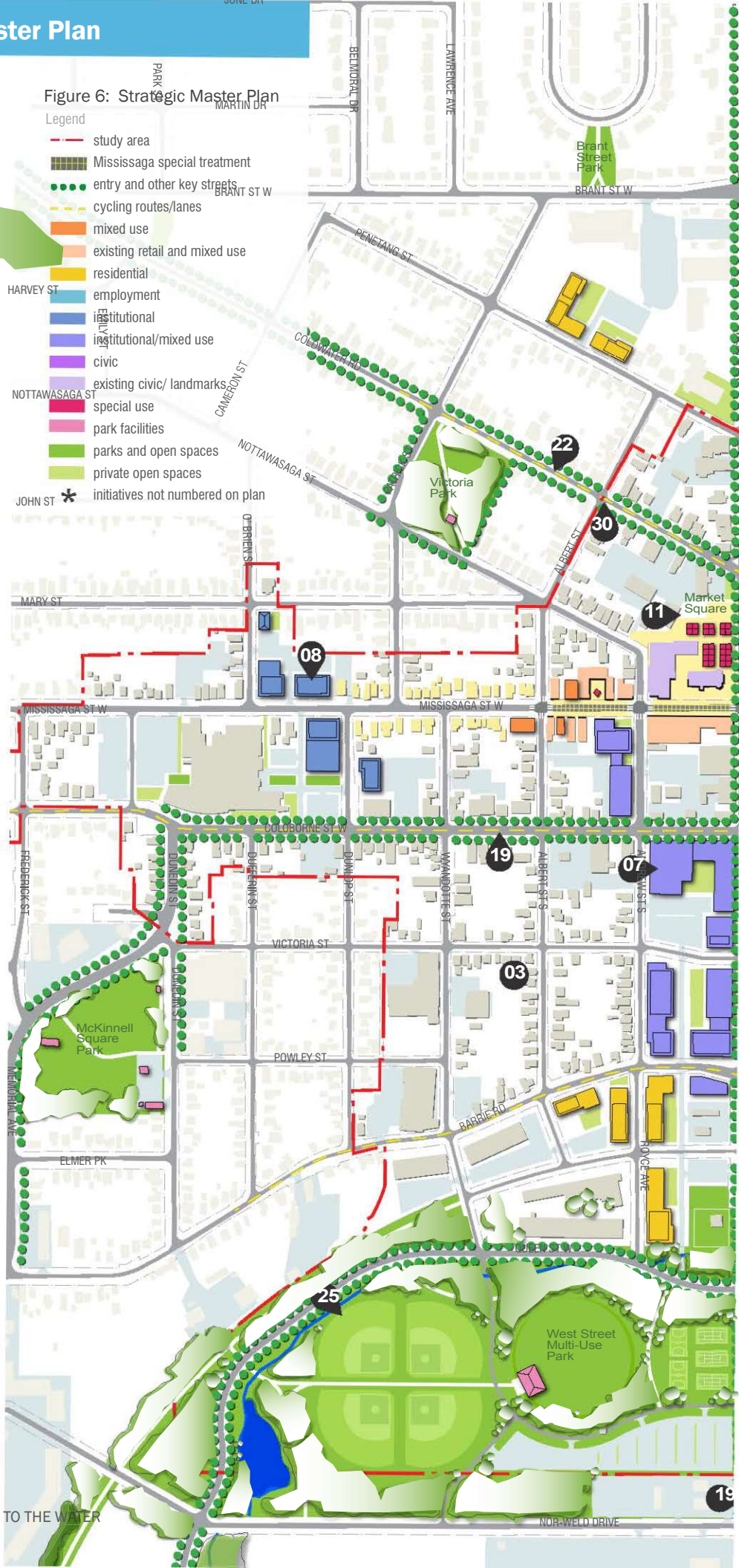
Create new spaces for playing, gathering and relaxing

- 23 Centennial Park Pier and Pavillion
- 24 Waterfront Parking Relocation
- 25 West Street Multi-use Park
- 26 Pumpkin Bay Facility Enhancements
- 27 Queen Street Greenway
- 28 Gathering Spaces and Neighbourhood Parks

Promote Orillia and enhance the visitor experience

- 29 Orillia Identity and Branding Update *
- 30 New Directional Signage
- 31 Tourist Information Centre Relocation
- 32 Parking Lot Enhancements
- 33 Downtown Hotels *

Figure 6: Strategic Master Plan





5.1

Increase the Residential Population Downtown

Thousands of people travel to Downtown Orillia on a routine basis, to work, shop, take in a cultural event or enjoy the waterfront. The number of people living Downtown, however, is in the hundreds.

Significantly increasing the residential population Downtown will be essential to growing the customer base for existing and new businesses, enlivening streets and making them feel safe, and generally creating vibrancy throughout the day and throughout the week. This has been the key to the successful revitalization of downtowns across North America. It also supports a more sustainable pattern of overall growth. Where heavy industry and rowdy behavior in urban cores once drove people to the suburbs, new housing on abandoned industrial lands and spruced up main streets are drawing them back. The keys to establishing Downtown as a great place to live are to encourage residential development, improve the conditions of existing neighbourhoods and locate important community services in the core.

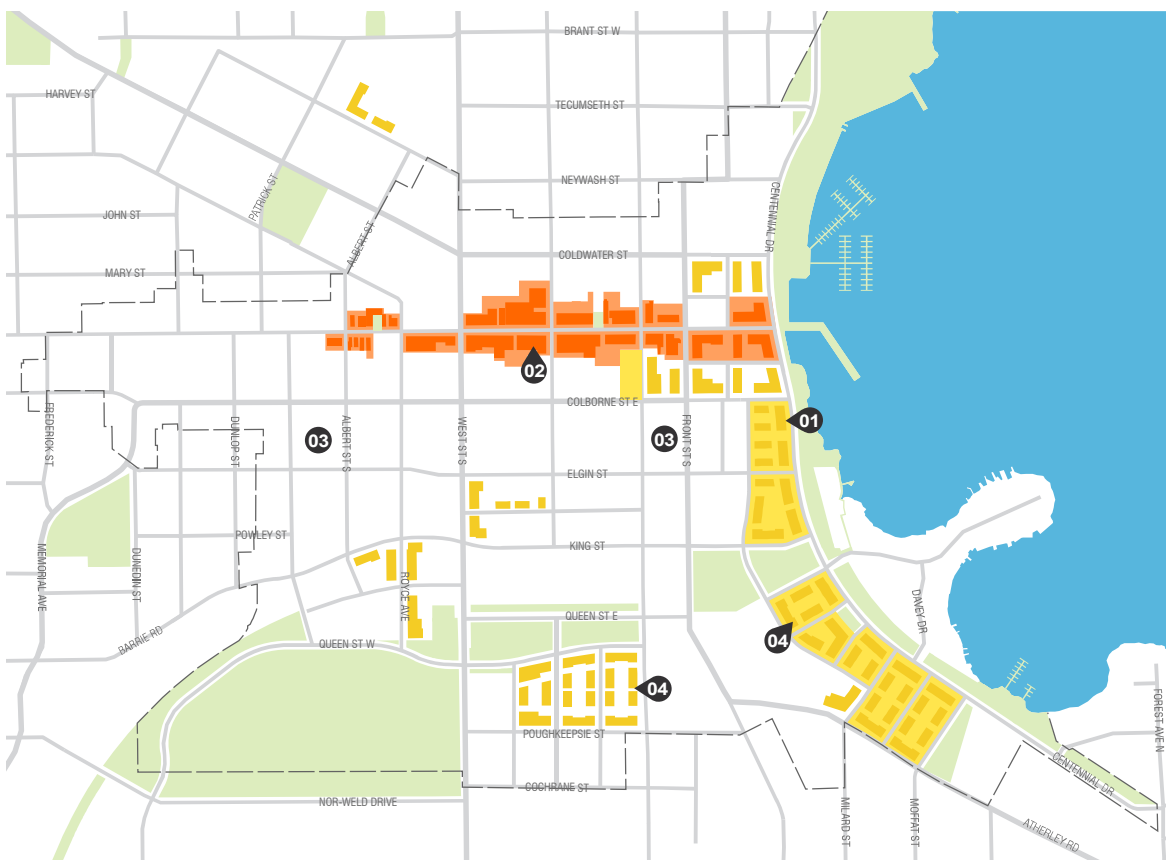


Figure 7: Initiatives 1-4

List of Projects

- 01/ Facilitate private development along the waterfront
- 02/ Encourage upper-storey residential conversions
- 03/ Encourage and support neighbourhood improvement
- 04/ Prepare a secondary plan for the South Core

Legend

- study area
- residential
- mixed use

01/ Facilitate Private Development Along the Waterfront

Among the many properties suitable for residential or mixed-use development downtown are three strategic “parcels” of land on the waterfront. The “Plaza Block” comprises the south half of the Metro shopping plaza and the City-owned open space east of the plaza. The “Legion Block” comprises the Legion Hall, the Imperial Oil property, the Liquor Store site and adjacent properties on Front Street and Colborne Street. The “Schachter Block” is the former Schachter scrap yard, together with a number of other adjacent lands in private ownership.

Besides providing housing close to the waterfront, the redevelopment of these three parcels, together with extensions of Coldwater Street and Colborne Street, will be central to connecting the core of Downtown to the Lake Couchiching waterfront, improving the image of Downtown to outsiders, and enhancing the waterfront experience for residents and visitors. Redevelopment of one or more of the parcels would also demonstrate the feasibility of brownfield renewal and the City’s commitment to achieving it. Initial projects would help to catalyze development on adjacent parcels and help set the stage for broader reinvestment in the Downtown.

The City should commit to playing an active role in facilitating redevelopment of these parcels. A facilitation role would involve some or all of the following. Which of these actions the City chooses to pursue and in what sequence will depend on the financial and human resource capacity of the City and the

willingness of affected landowners to cooperate. To implement multiple actions from the list below, and also advance other strategic initiatives, the City should consider hiring a full-time “Downtown Development Manager”.

- a. Putting in place the infrastructure and public realm improvements needed to service and attract development. This is the strategy being pursued by many agencies seeking to transform formerly industrial waterfronts—building parks, streets and stormwater management facilities that add value to adjacent lands and get them development-ready. In Orillia’s case, this might entail improving and extending Centennial Drive, extending Colborne Street East, improving the streetscape of lower Mississauga Street, and/or relocating the trunk sewer and overhead hydro lines between the former rail beds.
- b. Preparation of a Community Improvement Plan offering significant financial incentives to private developers and also enabling the City to acquire, hold and clear land for community improvement. This will be vital not only for the three waterfront parcels but also challenged sites across Downtown.
- c. Reducing or eliminating development charges, and potentially parkland dedication fees, on new multiple-unit housing downtown. Following consultation with the development community, the City should consider this incentive on a one-year or two-year trial basis.



- d. Amending the Official Plan to bring existing land use and built form policies into alignment with the Master Development Concept for Downtown, in the process providing more flexibility with regard to maximum building heights and densities on strategic sites.
- e. Pre-zoning the parcels for the desired uses and built form on each site. This should be done in consultation with the landowners with the expressed intent to encourage redevelopment. If the right zoning is in place, the City can be more assured that redevelopment, when it does happen, will be generally appropriate.
- f. Partnering with private landowners/developers by acquiring strategic properties for land assembly that results in more developable parcels. The City might be in a better financial position to acquire land than developers and can use its stake to ensure future development achieves public objectives, for example, a public connection to the waterfront, an affordable housing component, public parking, a community facility and/or architectural excellence. In the case of heavily contaminated properties, such as the Imperial Oil site, the City may be the only party the landowner will sell to, given the environmental risks. The City's partnering role could also include facilitating land exchanges and the relocation of businesses and residents, temporary or permanent, where necessary.
- g. Acquiring sites independently to consolidate parcels and create larger potential redevelopment sites, or to prevent undesirable uses from continuing or returning. The City could hold these lands or prepare them for redevelopment and an RFP process. With any land acquisition by the City, thorough due diligence on the conditions of the property will be critical.
- h. Disposal of land for redevelopment. If redevelopment of the south half of the Metro plaza seems to be a longer-term prospect, based on discussions with the landowner, and there are barriers to acquisition, then the City should consider selling the adjacent section of railway lands for mixed use development, through a competitive RFP process. While the size and depth of this property may limit its capacity for development, it could accommodate a low-rise apartment building with commercial space on the ground floor—a project that would have a significant positive impact on this stretch of waterfront.

02/ Encourage Upper-Storey Residential Conversions

People once living and working above the shops along Mississauga Street contributed to its vitality. Today, many of those spaces are empty but could be renovated into condominium or rental apartments (or office/studio space or hotel rooms). To encourage such reinvestments, the City should establish financial incentives through a new Community Improvement Plan for Downtown. In addition to the existing Façade Improvement Grant Program, the incentives to be considered should include design study grants (to assist with the preparation of architectural drawings), application fee waivers, rehabilitation and conversion grants or loans, and tax increment based grants.

The City should also actively promote upper-storey conversions and provide “how-to” information. Recognizing the potential barriers to conversion imposed by the Ontario Building Code, the City should consider taking a flexible approach to building standards where the Code allows and where it is critical to the success of a project.



03/ Encourage and Support Neighbourhood Improvement

Many existing homes downtown are well maintained but many are in need of improvement. These create less-than-ideal living environments for existing residents and diminish the qualities of the surrounding area, discouraging broader reinvestment and population growth. Underlying issues of unemployment and poverty contribute to housing conditions; nevertheless, encouragement in the form of financial incentives can be effective in incrementally turning around the appearance of neighbourhoods. Incentives for neighbourhood improvement, established as part of a new Community Improvement Plan, could be the same or similar to those targeted to upper-storey conversions, e.g., building permit fee waivers or grants, rehabilitation grants or loans, and tax increment based grants. Where there are vacant and inhabitable homes, the City should take action to ensure they are either rehabilitated or demolished. The City should also play an active role in neighbourhood revitalization by developing and implementing a program of streetscape improvements, specifically sidewalk repairs, tree planting and special paving at intersections.

04/ Prepare a Secondary Plan for the South Core

While there are strategic short-term opportunities for new housing in the historic core, redevelopment of former industrial and commercial lands in the South Core, generally south of Elgin Street, may take longer to initiate and fully implement. An important first step will be the preparation of a Secondary Plan, as an amendment to the Official Plan, informed by the vision for the area reflected in the Master Development Concept. Through more detailed study, the Secondary Plan should identify an optimal structure of streets and open spaces for the area and establish built form parameters. The opportunity to restore wetlands in the area should be explored, and appropriate locations for neighbourhood-oriented commercial uses should be identified. The plan should also clarify existing environmental conditions and identify strategies to overcome barriers to development.



5.2

Reinforce Downtown as a Civic and Institutional Hub

Downtown Orillia is a centre of government, a regional hub for health care and social services, and now home to a campus of Lakehead University. Civic and institutional uses bring vitality to the core and attract other employers, including a range of professionals who complement and support institutions, as well as commercial services.

A city of the planned size of Orillia only needs one civic centre, and so the City's major facilities serving the entire population should be located Downtown whenever possible. This is particularly important in light of the desire to significantly increase the Downtown population of residents and visitors.

Soldiers' Memorial Hospital is a key institutional and employment anchor in the core, and plans to enhance its facilities, build complementary uses, and integrate the hospital more fully and compatibly with the downtown should be encouraged. Increasing the academic population Downtown, including students, faculty

and staff of Lakehead University and Georgian College, will help ensure Downtown has the economic and social diversity city centres thrive on. A strong educational presence will encourage new and creative enterprises Downtown and maintaining a youthful vibrancy. Both Lakehead and Georgian are interested in expanding their presence Downtown, taking advantage of programming links between the two institutions and with Soldiers' Memorial Hospital. The City should facilitate this, with the goal of creating a well-defined academic campus. It should also encourage housing developments targeted to students and employees of Lakehead and Georgian.

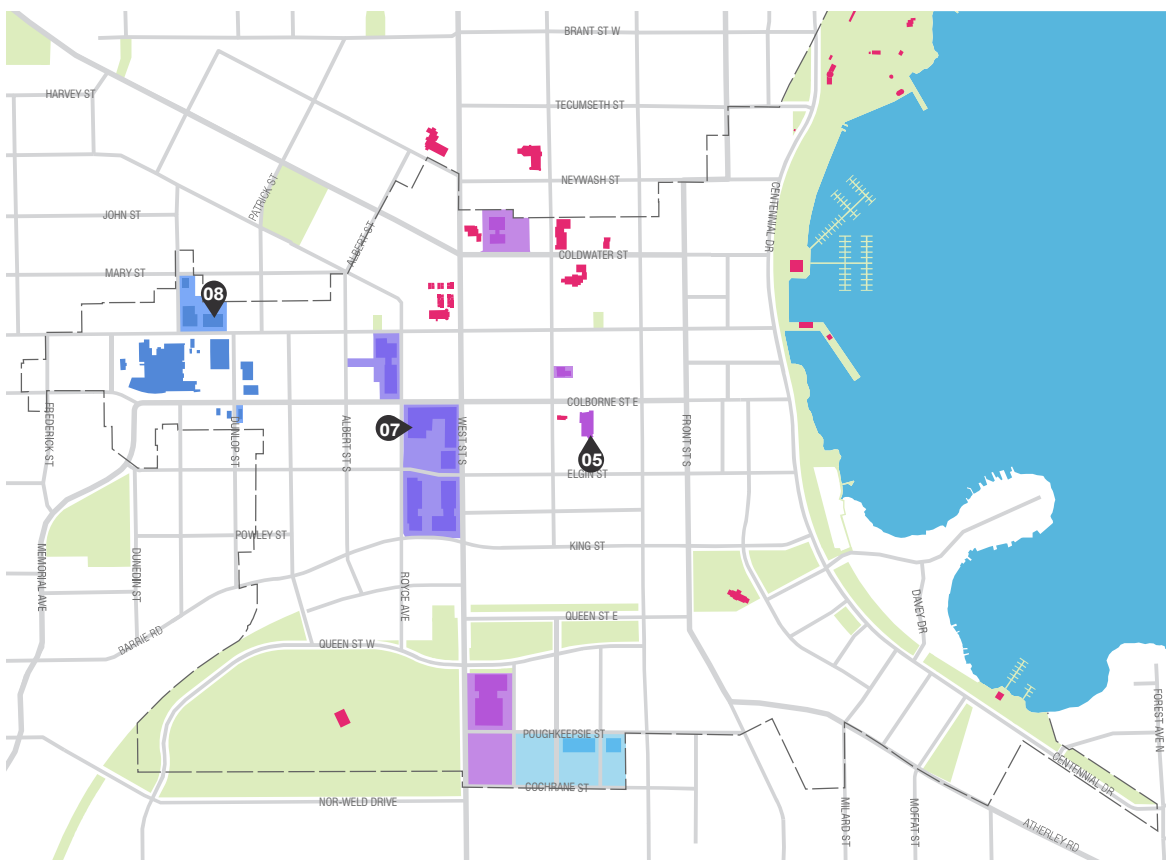


Figure 8: Initiatives 5-9

List of Projects

- 05/ Replace the OPP Detachment Building
- 06/ Build a leisure and wellness centre *
- 07/ Develop shared academic facilities
- 08/ Encourage improvements to Soldiers' Memorial Hospital
- 09/ Relocate City Hall *

Legend

- study area
- employment
- institutional
- institutional/mixed use
- civic
- landmarks
- * initiatives not numbered on plan

05/ Replace the OPP Detachment Building

The headquarters for the police services for Orillia should continue to be located Downtown, central to those who work there and the citizens it serves. The existing OPP Detachment is undersized and out of date, and there are plans to replace it. Once the City has decided whether or not to continue to be policed by the OPP, it should proceed with replacing the existing building. As an important civic structure that contributes to the character of Downtown, the new building should be held to a high standard of architectural excellence.

06/ Build a Leisure and Wellness Centre

People move to downtowns to be close to almost everything, including shops, restaurants and cultural destinations but also community services—a central library, health care and recreation facilities. For some time, the City has been planning a new multi-use recreation facility (MURF). At the same time, investments in Soldiers' Memorial Hospital and other health care facilities, complemented by health-related programs at Lakehead University and Georgian College, have reinforced Downtown as a wellness hub. From these common interests in personal and community well-being, the concept of a Leisure and Wellness Centre has emerged.

The Leisure and Wellness Centre would be a place for recreation, rehabilitation and training but also for gatherings of professionals and students in health care fields. It would serve the indoor recreational needs of Orillians, as reflected in the current program for the MURF, but its program might be expanded to include additional rehab, teaching and meeting facilities.



07/ Develop Shared Academic Facilities

The City should work with the hospital, university and college, as well as other local health service providers, to explore the feasibility of partnerships that would support a Leisure and Wellness Centre. If there is the necessary support, at least in principle, a program for the facility should be developed, building on the MURF program. Depending on the scope of the full program and the availability of funding, the Leisure and Wellness Centre may be a phased project. A site should be selected Downtown that can accommodate the ultimate program and is accessible to both the public and the partnering institutions.

Based on the interest by Lakehead University and Georgian College to locate new academic programs Downtown, or expand existing Lakehead programs, the City should work with the two institutions and the hospital to identify potential locations for a shared academic facility. The most feasible option likely is an existing vacant or under-utilized building close to the Tudhope Building, where Lakehead is currently located Downtown. The institutions might lease or purchase the space from a private landowner, or the City might purchase the property and lease it back to the university and college. Alternatively, depending on if and when the City decides to relocate City Hall (see recommendation below), the current location in the Tudhope Building could be given or leased to one or both of the institutions.

Regardless of the feasibility of new academic facilities Downtown in the short-term, the City should formally establish a “higher education working group” to pursue the opportunity and generally improve the linkages between Lakehead, Georgian and Downtown on an ongoing basis.



08/ Encourage Improvements to Soldiers' Memorial Hospital

Soldiers' Memorial Hospital is planning to move many of its ambulatory care services to a separate building of up to four storeys and 80,000 square feet close to the hospital. This should be encouraged to allow the hospital to expand and to improve the physical relationship between the hospital and Downtown. From the perspective of downtown revitalization, the most appropriate location for an ambulatory care facility would be the southwest corner of Mississauga Street and Dunlop Street, where it would fill a gap in the streetscape and reinforce the hospital site as a destination on the City's main street. Other locations further east on Mississauga Street or on Colborne Street, where transit access and public parking are convenient, can also be considered.

With recent expansion of the hospital and increasing use of its facilities, parking areas continue to expand into the surrounding neighbourhoods, replacing existing buildings and detracting from otherwise attractive streetscapes. To prevent further impacts on the character of the neighbourhoods, the hospital should develop a transportation and parking strategy that seeks to reduce parking demand, promotes the use of shared parking lots and considers more remote parking options (away from the neighbourhoods). Ultimately, the hospital likely will need to consolidate much of its parking in a structure on its main site or on the east side of Dunlop Street.

09/ Relocate City Hall

City Hall today is located in the historic Tudhope Building, on Andrew Street. While this was a practical adaptive re-use project, the building does not have the distinctive and stately appearance befitting a city of Orillia's growing stature. Its large footprint also results in a number of windowless working and meeting spaces. With the desire to expand the presence of Lakehead University and Georgian College Downtown, the building would be more suitably planned for academic space. Alternatively, it could be converted to conventional office space or apartments.

In light of the building's shortcomings as a City Hall, and the opportunity for expanded academic facilities, the City should begin to plan a new City Hall, using the project to reinforce the historic core of Downtown and create a legacy. The beautiful Central School building, with an addition, is one potential location to consider; however, the site's setting on Coldwater Street, away from Mississauga Street, next to an established neighbourhood and opposite a parking lot, is not ideal. From an urban design perspective, a better location would be along the historic main street in order to focus institutional employment and activity where it will have the most impact. A City Hall on Mississauga Street would add another legacy building that reinforces the civic heart of Downtown.

The first step in planning a new City Hall should be a feasibility study, including a preliminary program and site options analysis.



5.3

Celebrate Downtown's Cultural Heritage and Activity

Culture is a way for downtowns to distinguish themselves and encourage economic development. Orillia's built and cultural heritage, as well as its current cultural scene, are central to its identity, its quality of life and the experiences it offers to visitors.

Protecting and promoting the highly valued elements of the City's heritage, on the one hand, and celebrating and growing the arts community, on the other, will be important to Downtown's future success as a cultural destination.

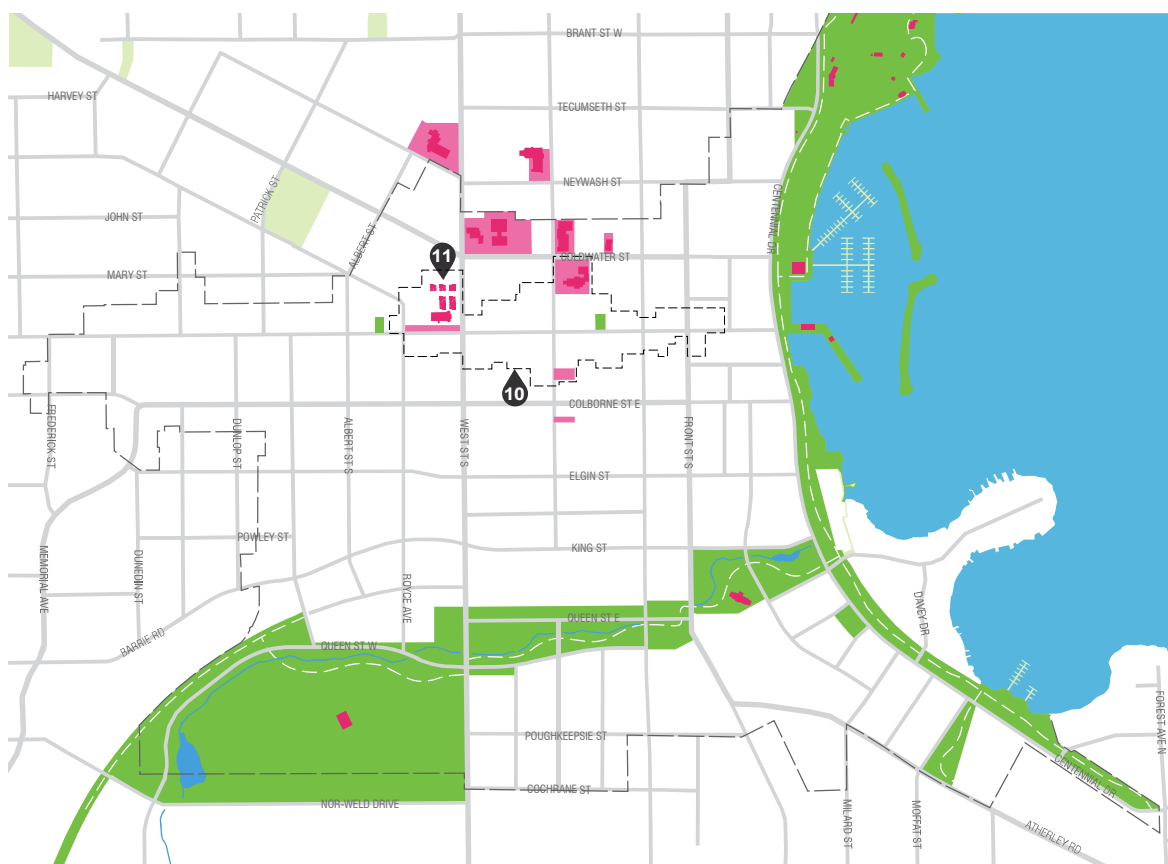


Figure 9: Initiatives 10-13

List of Projects

- 10/ Adopt the Heritage Conservation District Plan and protect significant heritage properties
- 11/ Relocate the Farmers' Market
- 12/ Establish the Leacock Centre for the Arts *
- 13/ Facilitate living, working and event space for artists *

Legend

- study area
- cultural landmarks
- parks and open spaces
- - - heritage conservation district (HDC) boundary
- * initiatives not numbered on plan

10/ Adopt the Heritage Conservation District Plan and Protect Significant Heritage Properties

The historic built fabric of Orillia's Downtown is one of its greatest assets. It contributes to the City's quality of life and is a main cultural attraction for visitors. The intent of the Heritage Conservation District (HCD) Plan completed in April 2012 is to ensure the character of the City's historic core is maintained and celebrated. The HCD Plan should be adopted by City Council and the recommended implementation process should be established.

The HCD Study also recommended that the City re-assess properties currently designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act, as well as those currently listed on the City's Register, to bring the property inventories and evaluations into conformity with the requirements of the 2005 Heritage Act and the Historic Places Initiative national register of historic properties. This re-assessment should proceed and should consider designated, listed and unlisted properties throughout Downtown that have been identified as having cultural and/or architectural significance. Where merited, significant heritage properties within and beyond the HCD should be designated to ensure the stricter controls under Part IV of the Heritage Act apply to protect designated buildings from demolition or major physical changes.

11/ Relocate the Farmers' Market

The historic Orillia Farmers' Market, besides supporting local farmers and encouraging healthy eating, is a major Downtown attraction and part of the City's cultural fabric. It is a routine community event and, integrated with the shops and restaurants of Downtown, offers a traditional experience that can't be replicated in a suburban retail environment.

The Farmers' Market has had success in its "temporary" location at City Hall, but businesses on Mississauga Street have seen less Saturday traffic since the relocation. The new Market Square built in conjunction with the library has been designed in anticipation of the market returning; however, there are concerns that the new space is less well-suited to accommodating the market than the previous space and that parking will be less convenient. Nevertheless, efforts should be made to configure and manage the market within Market Square, its historic home (while vendors may feel cramped, market-goers tend to expect the frenzied atmosphere created by the traditionally tight spaces of an outdoor market). If necessary, letting the market overflow onto surrounding streets should be considered. Another option would be to design one of the larger public parking lots at the rear of the buildings on Mississauga Street so that it can be converted to a market place on Saturdays. With either of these more central locations, parking might become less convenient for market patrons, but that would encourage visits to other Downtown businesses. A parcel pick-up service could be arranged for those carrying a heavy load of market goods.



12/ Establish the Leacock Centre for the Arts

Lakehead University proposes to develop the Leacock Centre for the Arts, “a nationally-recognized centre of learning which, in close collaboration with the communities of Simcoe County, supports the development of the arts and the exploration of the role of arts and culture in supporting the social, cultural and economic development of smaller communities.” The mission is to deliver high quality credit and non-credit programming with a focus on arts, culture and community development. The intent is to establish a training ground for those in the arts and culture business.

The Leacock Centre is a worthy initiative that can only enhance Orillia’s status as a cultural hub of national significance. While summer programming may take advantage of the availability of facilities and residences on Lakehead’s West Orillia Campus, the centre should have a strong presence downtown, including programs and events that directly link to and support cultural amenities in the core. The City should work with the university to advance development of the Leacock Centre and coordinate programming with other cultural initiatives.

13/ Facilitate Living, Working and Event Space for Artists

Orillia’s strong arts community is an asset to steadily grow and build upon, since it supports healthy communities and attracts creative businesses, new residents and tourists. The City can nurture the arts scene by encouraging the retrofitting of older buildings for studio, exhibit and performance space through financial incentives (see Initiative 02). Established and new arts events, such as Starry Night, should continue to be supported and promoted.

Peter Street has emerged as the hub of the City’s arts community, and initiatives to distinguish the street and showcase the work of artists with banners, murals and events should be encouraged. In conjunction with implementation of a retail strategy (see Initiative 14), the DOMB and businesses, with support from the City, should work collectively and individually to program musical performances and readings in stores and bistros/cafes/pubs as well as on the street. Buskers should be encouraged and, if necessary, managed.

Since most artists live on low incomes, the City can support economic and cultural development in the “creative sector” by supporting affordable housing projects in the community. One potential project to explore, in partnership with a non-profit developer like Toronto-based Artscape, is the conversion of Central School into a centre where visual artists can live, work, exhibit and teach. Such a project would reinforce the City’s image as a must-see destination for artists and art lovers.



5.4

Improve the Shopping and Dining Experience Downtown

More people living, working and learning Downtown will bring much-needed year-round support to existing businesses and lead to improved economic viability in the core with the resulting attraction of high-quality businesses. Downtown cultural venues and events will also see more patronage.

As the Downtown population grows, there are other initiatives the City, the Downtown Orillia Management Board (DOMB) and the broader community should pursue to enhance the Downtown as a commercial destination. In terms of retail offerings, Downtown should not try to compete with suburban malls, plazas and “big boxes”. What it can and should do, however, is provide a very different and attractive retail experience and a range of unique stores and services—independent business offering personal service and quality merchandise not found at chain stores. This experience exists for a few blocks of Mississauga Street, but it can be improved and extended.



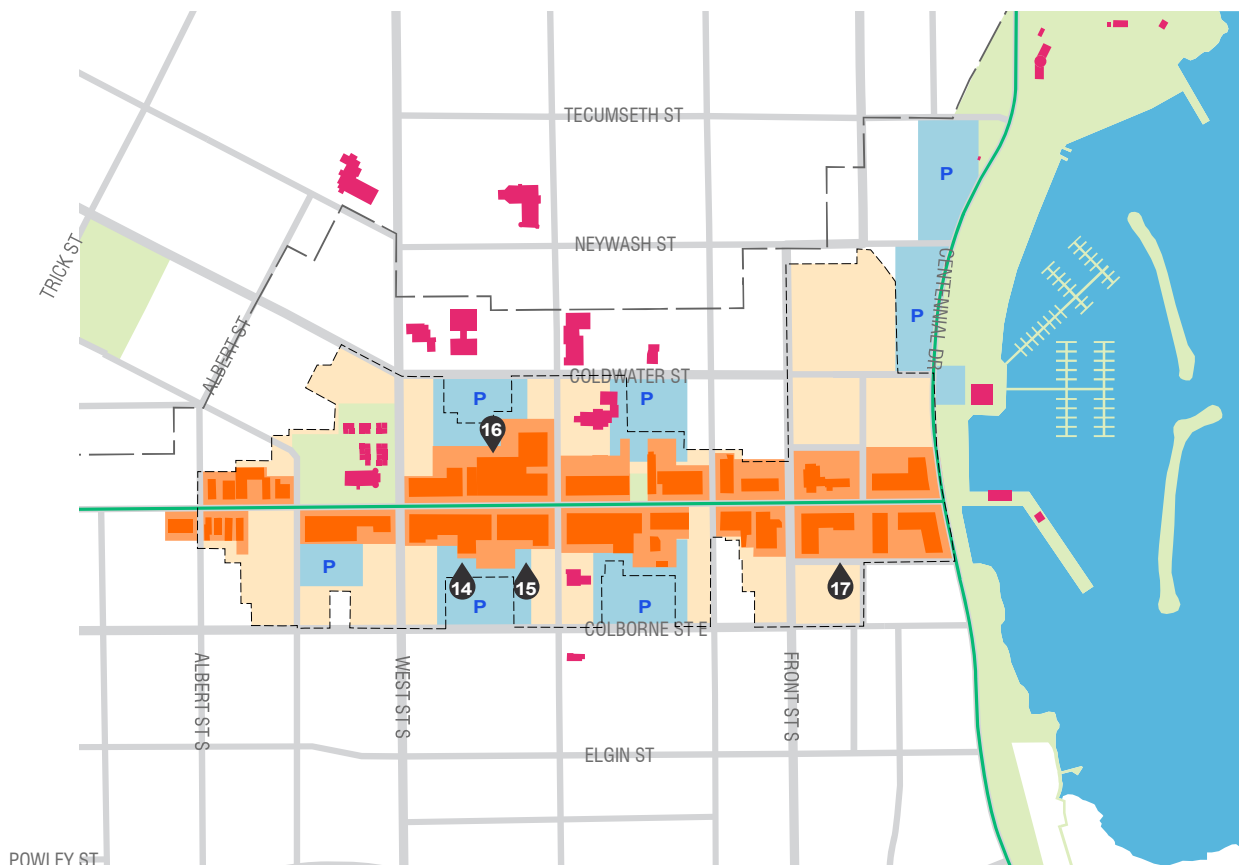
Figure 10: Initiatives 14-17

List of Projects

- 14/ Attract specialty retailers under the themes of food, fashion, creativity and play
- 15/ Coordinate shopping hours
- 16/ Maintain and improve storefronts
- 17/ Extend the retail experience to the waterfront

Legend

- study area
- special treatment streets
- - - BIA boundary
- primary retail
- secondary retail
- landmarks
- key parking areas



14/ Attract Specialty Retailers Under the Themes of Food, Fashion, Creativity and Play

Mississauga Street is the place to go for interesting foods and unique merchandise, but this experience can be significantly enhanced, particularly east of Peter Street. Given the success of businesses like the Mariposa Market and the nearby presence of the Metro and LCBO stores, other specialty food retailers should do well, drawing customers that will support existing businesses. The types of food offerings that one should find Downtown include a deli, imported foods, ethnic foods, health/organic foods, specialty butcher/meat, fish/seafood, pastry, cheese shop, candy/chocolate/confection, fruit/vegetable, pre-prepared take-out meals, organic specialties, gluten-free and lactose free foods, bakery and an LCBO with a Vintages Section. Together with cafes, pubs and restaurants, a greater selection of food shops (some providing an eat-in experience) will provide a complete food experience for all Orillia residents and draw more tourists to Downtown.

Downtown would also benefit from a greater variety of other specialty retailers selling high-end women's clothing, shoes, clothing accessories, jewelry, cosmetics, perfume, men's clothing, personal electronics, and gifts that are unique, locally-made and/or First Nation in character.

From Peter Street west to Albert Street, the experience should be tied to the arts, design and play, building on the cultural anchors in the area. Both on and west of Peter Street, the following types

of businesses should be attracted and retained: galleries and craft shops, photo studios, book stores, arts and craft supplies, toy/hobby shops, music shops, antique/houseware/home décor stores, and sports and outdoor adventure stores.

The DOMB, with support from the City, should undertake the following next steps toward identifying and attracting new businesses Downtown:

- Complete an inventory of existing retail businesses, including the goods and services provided and a quality rating. Identify the key “missing pieces”.
- Complete an inventory of available retail space, including total square footage at grade, owner/manager contact information, purchase price/lease rates, and terms and conditions.
- Develop a retail data and information package promoting Downtown as a place to open shop, including photographs of events, summer traffic data and standard retail data on purchasing, which can be customized to each target business.
- Seek out successful retail operators elsewhere in Orillia and out of town (e.g., Barrie, Collingwood, Port Perry) that are progressive and understand the market opportunity in Orillia. The DOMB should play a lead role on this.
- Review the Zoning By-law and consider restrictions or prohibitions on ground-floor uses that are inconsistent with the vision for Mississauga Street, such as professional offices and personal services.



15/ Coordinate Shopping Hours

Most retailers Downtown are independent and set their store hours to suit their lifestyle. The result is that opening and closing times vary widely across Downtown—with an estimated 14 hours per week that a shopper might find all stores open for business. The downtown needs to present much greater consistency in its store hours to attract and retain regular shoppers, and to not turn off the current casual Downtown patron. By discouraging shopping trips of any length, the synergy of a main street is missing and all businesses lose potential customers from the lack of walk-by traffic at most times of the day.

The DOMB should work with Downtown merchants to better coordinate store hours. On a trial basis but hopefully permanently, there should be a commitment by all store owners to stay open until 9:00 p.m. at least one night per week, perhaps Thursday, and 6:00 p.m. the remaining weekday evenings. The ability to shop Downtown during the newly established store hours should be promoted.

16/ Maintain and Improve Storefronts

Continuous storefront façades that are varied and interesting, and that present an overall local heritage character, encourage pedestrians and shoppers to keep walking and explore and experience more. Closed or vacant storefronts, or worse, vacant lots or storefronts set far back from the sidewalk, severely interrupt the pedestrian flow. Professional offices and services on the ground floor are also an undesirable break in the rhythm of storefronts.

The new Heritage Conservation District Guidelines should provide the basis for the improvement of facades along Mississauga Street. The City's updated Sign By-law for Downtown should be enforced. Perpendicular hanging signs should be encouraged.

With preparation of a new Community Improvement Plan for Downtown, the effectiveness of the existing Façade Improvement Grant Program should be reviewed with the DOMB and revisions should be considered. In addition, the Zoning By-law should be amended to prohibit professional offices and services on the ground floor of buildings fronting Mississauga Street between West Street and the waterfront. To further ensure ground floor uses help to enliven the street, the maximum frontage of a financial institution should also be restricted, and minimum requirements for glazing should be set.



17/ Extend the Retail Experience to the Waterfront

Mississauga Street is a relatively intact and vibrant main street between West Street and Front Street, roughly three blocks. West of West Street, the retail environment is less healthy but has the potential to be revitalized. More significant are the building gaps between Front Street and the waterfront. These gaps physically separate the historic core of Downtown from the lake and prevent visitors from enjoying a full retail experience.

As new development occurs on blocks east of Front Street, it will be critical to ensure the ground floors of new buildings contain retail space oriented to Mississauga Street. This will have the two-way effect of drawing local downtown patrons to the waterfront and drawing waterfront visitors up Mississauga Street. The rhythm of storefronts, the approach to signage and the general character of facades should be consistent with the best qualities of the streetscape west of Front Street. Building setbacks and the width of the boulevard should allow for street furnishings and restaurant patios.

Until redevelopment does occur, the City and the DOMB should work together to attract and accommodate street vendors, or a craft fair, at the bottom end of Mississauga Street during the summer and shoulder-season weekends. Preferred vendors would include independent artisans but might also include merchants from further west on Mississauga Street each selling a selection of goods from their store. To improve the retail image of the street, the methadone clinic on the northwest corner of Front Street and Mississauga Street should be relocated to a less prominent Downtown location.



5.5

Improve Connectivity and Streetscapes Downtown

Most of Downtown Orillia has a well-defined grid network of streets that provides for a high degree of connectivity within the core. Unfortunately, a number of streets come to an abrupt end at former rail corridors and industrial sites.

Over time, existing streets need to be extended to the waterfront and new public streets need to be built as large former industrial sites are redeveloped. South of Mississaga Street, extended and new streets should terminate at a new waterfront drive and promenade, which will open up this stretch of waterfront for greater public enjoyment. The planned streets will fully integrate all parts of Downtown and make it easier to move around on foot, on bicycle and by car. In addition, the streetscapes of the primary east-west streets through the historic core need improvement to beautify Downtown and encourage street life. The excellent waterfront trail system is a well-used part of the Downtown mobility network. More clearly defined and safer connections through the core, particularly for cyclists, will improve access to the waterfront trail as well as destinations throughout Downtown.

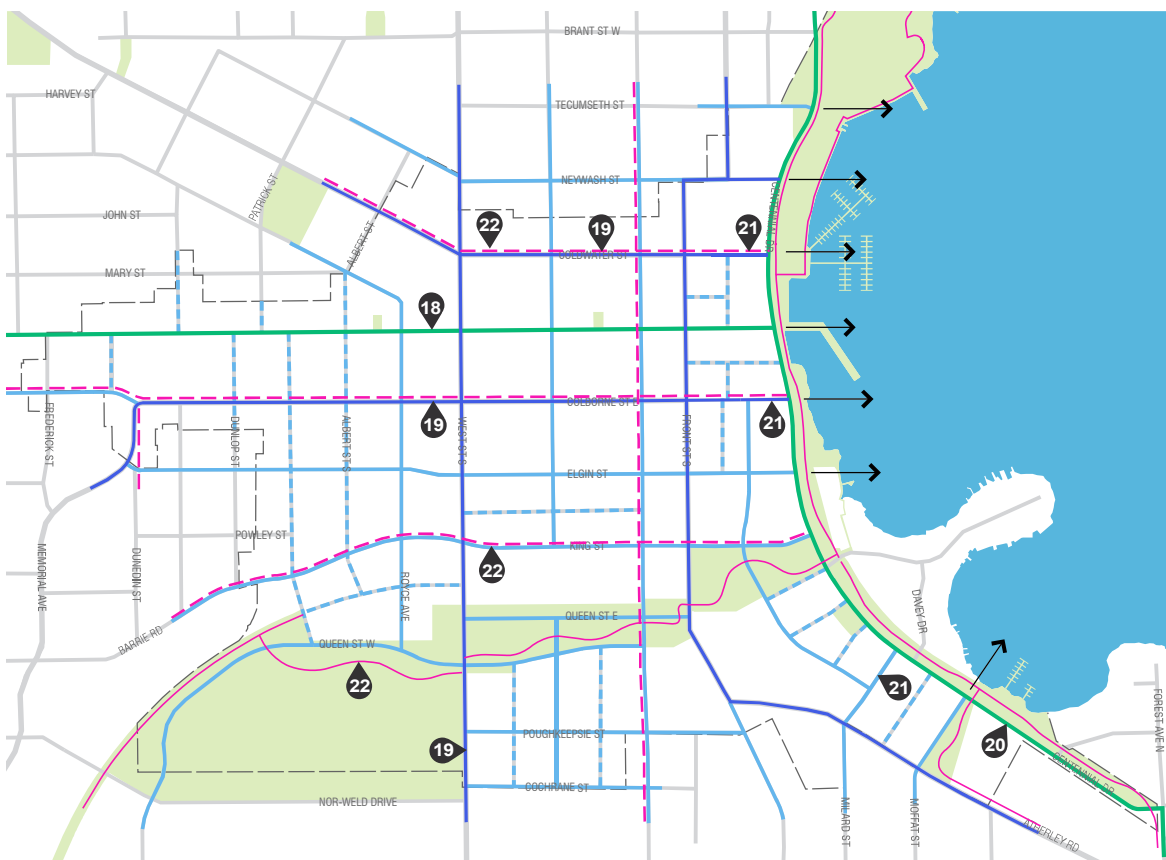


Figure 11: Initiatives 18-22

List of Projects

- 18/ Mississaga Street Enhancements
- 19/ Beautification of Key Entry Streets
- 20/ Extension and Redesign of Centennial Drive
- 21/ New Streets to the Waterfront
- 22/ Downtown Bicycle Network

Legend

- study area
- special treatment streets
- major streets
- main streets
- local streets
- cycling routes/lanes
- trail network
- viewscape

18/ Upgrade and Enhance Mississaga Street East

Mississaga Street has a distinct and generally attractive main street character. The streetscape, however, is showing its age and there is the potential to narrow the roadway and widen the boulevards, at the same time refreshing the paving treatments, maintaining on-street parking and preserving healthy trees. There are also opportunities at corners and where there are gaps in the streetwall to add pedestrian amenities, such as benches, planters and signage, as well improved signage to parking.

Key improvements to Mississaga's public realm should include:

- Maintaining a distinctive paving treatment along the length of the street, creating a similar effect to that of the existing interlocked stones.
- Delineating a 'shared-use zone', where on certain days parking spaces could transition into spill out spaces and terraces to support restaurants and cafes. The occasional transformation of Mississaga Street into a pedestrian-only zone should also be continued for major Downtown events.
- Renewed landscaping, lighting and coordinated street furniture the length of the street.

Figure 13 illustrates a potential new cross-section for Mississaga Street. Informed by this, the City should initiate a street master plan that sets out detailed guidelines for the street's redesign and reconstruction from the Hospital to the lake. The plan should be coordinated with the Heritage Conservation District Plan and future storefront guidelines. The streetscape design for the bottom end of Mississaga Street should also be coordinated with plans for Centennial Drive and its extension south as well as any active development plans for adjacent lands. The design of the streetscape between the hospital and Albert Street should respond to the residential character of the adjacent neighbourhoods.



19/ Beautify Coldwater Street, Colborne Street and Other Key Entry Streets

With pedestrian and retail activity focused on Mississauga Street, the parallel streets to the north and south, Coldwater and Colborne Streets, have assumed a service-oriented and thru-traffic function. They have wider roadways and provide access to parking lots and service areas. As a result they are not very attractive or pedestrian friendly.

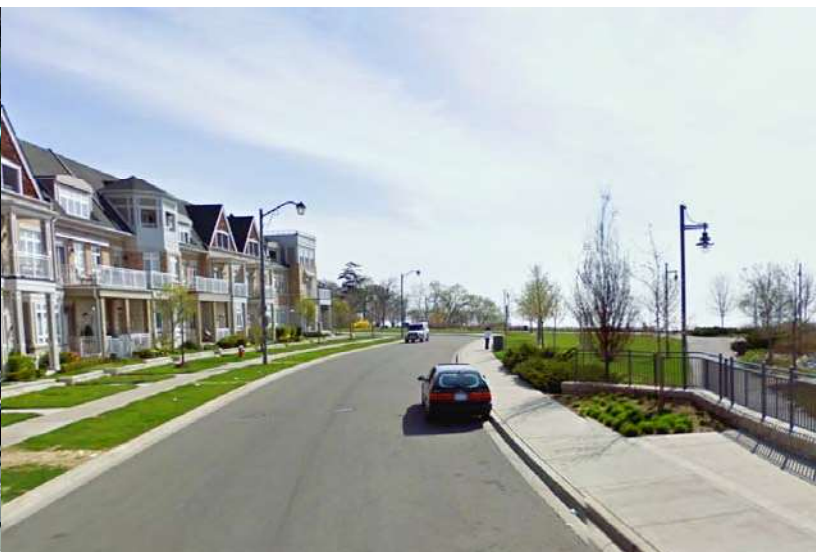
However, Coldwater Street and Colborne Streets are key places of arrival, especially for visitors arriving from Highway 11, and are planned to be important links to the waterfront. They should have more attractive streetscapes and be more inviting to pedestrians and cyclists. The City should prepare new guidelines for them and, building on recent boulevard enhancements, phase in improvements that widen the boulevards, add street trees and landscape buffers, minimize driveway widths, add cycling facilities, and provide opportunities for more on-street parking. Figure 14 illustrates a conceptual cross-section to be considered.

Similarly, the streetscapes of Atherley Road, Front Street, West Street, Memorial Avenue and Lacie Street, as one approaches Downtown, should be improved, primarily through tree planting and distinctive light standards.

20/ Redesign and Extend Centennial Drive

Great urban waterfronts have a great waterfront street. Not a wide, busy road that cuts off the water's edge from the rest of the city, but a narrow street with slow-moving traffic, beautiful landscaping, wide sidewalks and potentially an integrated bike path. A street that can be partially closed to vehicles for special events and on busy weekends. A street that separates development facing the water from open spaces, trails and promenades at the water's edge. This is what Centennial Drive should be, and why it should be extended south, potentially all the way to Forest Avenue. Figure 12 illustrates the concept for the right-of-way of an improved and extended Centennial Drive. The City should move forward with detailed plans and designs for the street. The conceptual alignment of the street lies within land owned by the City; however, detailed designs may reveal the need for small parcels of private land to be acquired. At the north end, any changes to the current alignment should maintain French's stand in its current location.

In order to manage costs, and to minimize disruption to property owners, construction of the street should be phased and coordinated with related initiatives, including the relocation of the trunk sewer within the former rail corridor, the relocation of waterfront parking, other open space improvements, and private development on adjacent lands where it is proceeding in a timely manner. Generally, construction of the street should not wait for adjacent private development to occur. Once built, the street will make the waterfront more accessible and attractive, which will make adjacent development more appealing and viable.



Key Street Cross Sections

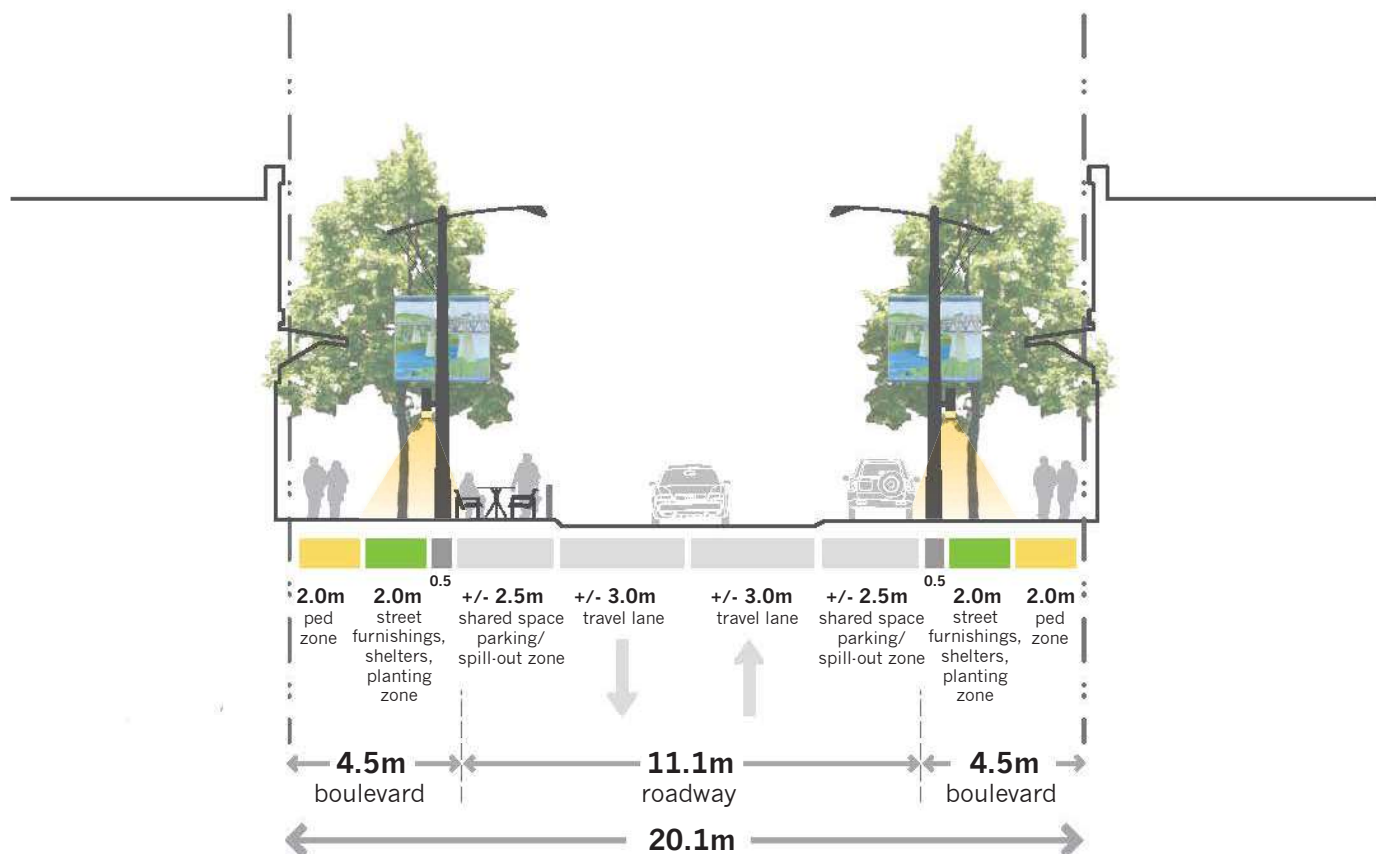
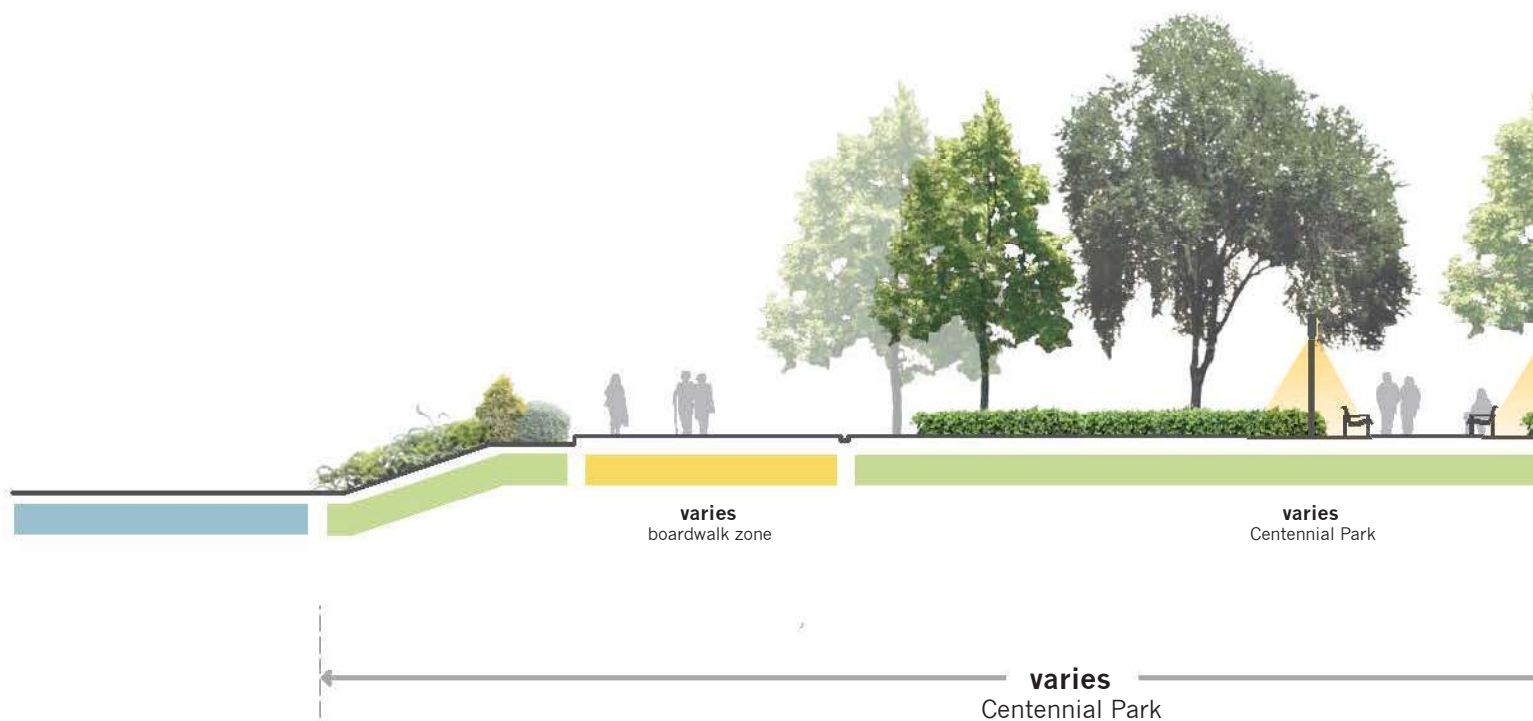


Figure 13: Mississauga Street

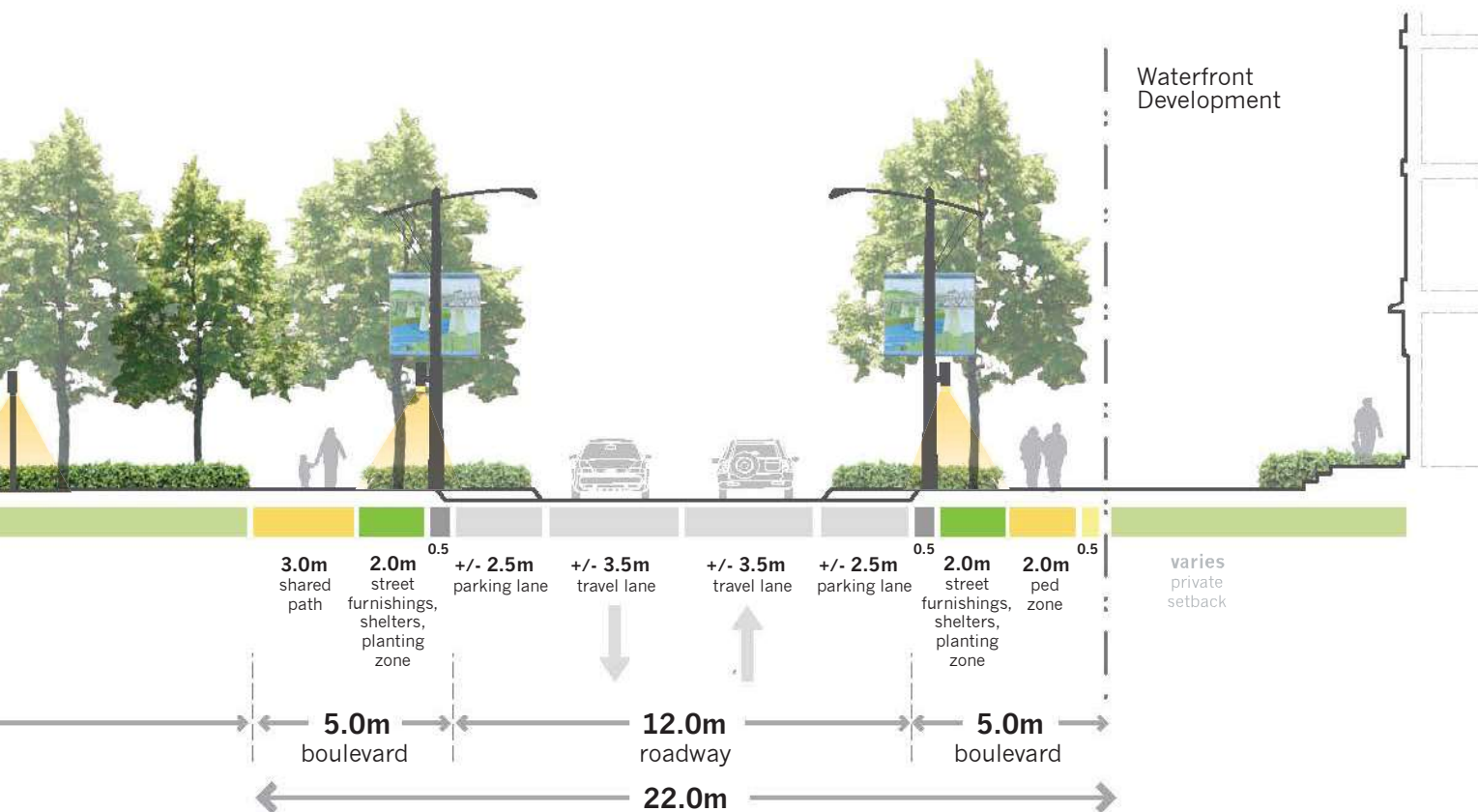


Figure 12: Centennial Drive (at park)

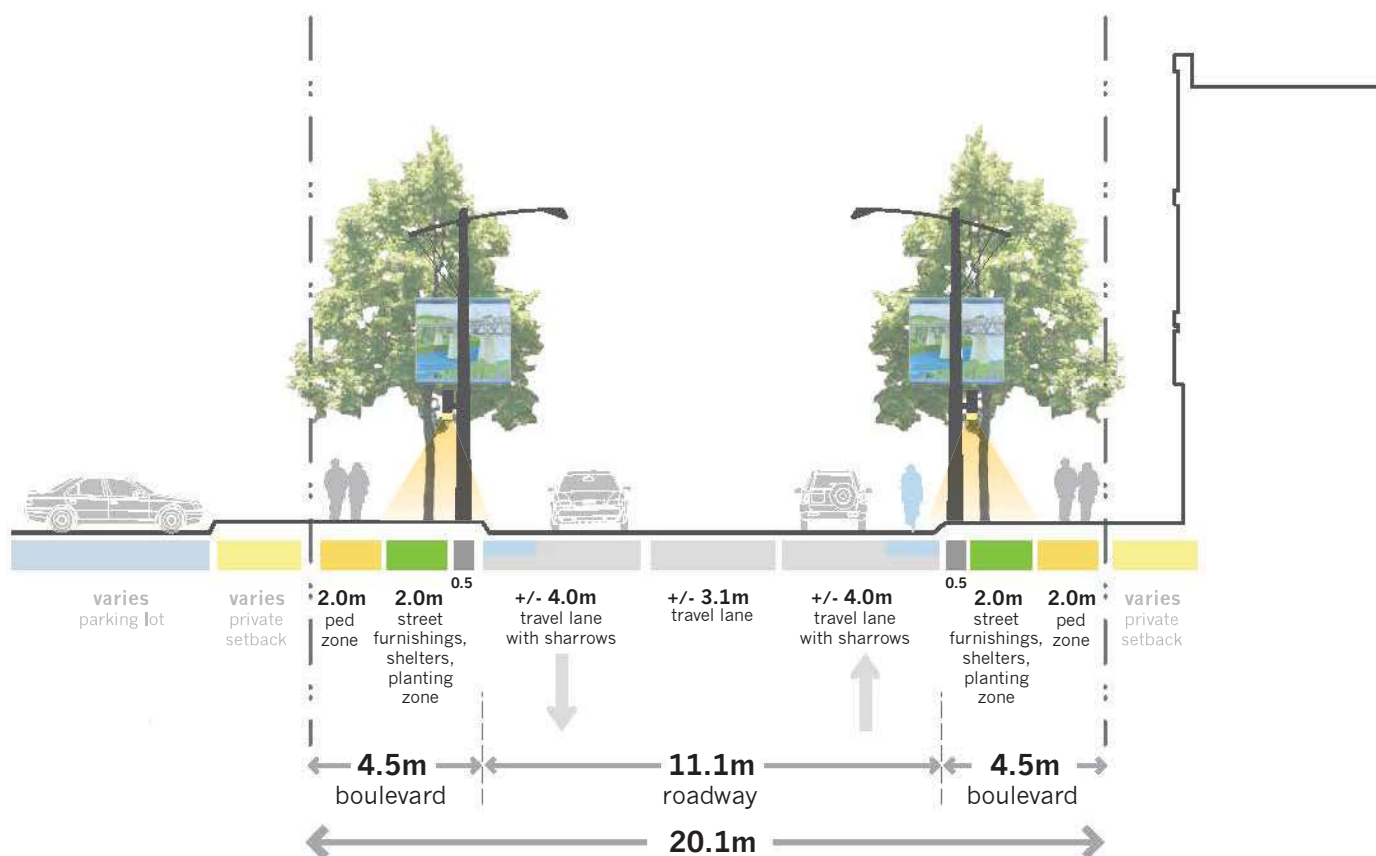


Figure 14: Colborne and Coldwater Streets

21/ Build New Streets to the Waterfront

New streets to the Downtown Waterfront will be critical to connecting the lake to the city. They will create windows in the urban fabric, so the lake can be seen from multiple points in the Downtown. And they will make it much easier to move between the waterfront and the core by foot, bicycle, car and other mobility devices. There are obvious existing key streets, like Neywash, Coldwater, Colborne and King, that should be extended to an improved and extended Centennial Drive. There are also new local streets required south of King Street, on the Rexton Property, to provide connections between Atherley Road and the future extension of Centennial Drive. These should be secured as those lands are redeveloped. Generally, new local streets should have a 20-metre wide right-of-way.

The City's Official Plan identifies several future "views" to the waterfront, i.e., street extensions to the waterfront. Where the views fall on private land, the Official Plan ensures that they will be provided when the land is redeveloped. The Official Plan should be amended to include the additional views identified in Figure 11.

22/ Identify the Downtown Bicycle Network

It should be easy to get to Downtown and the Waterfront by bicycle, and all streets Downtown should feel safe for cycling by most adults. The City recently completed a Draft Active Transportation Plan aimed at encouraging more walking and cycling with a comprehensive network of bike routes for the City. Recognizing the need for improved cycling connections within the core, it recommends that a number of streets be identified and signed as bicycle routes, that bike lanes be added to Coldwater Street (west of Matchedash Street), and that multi-use trails through the South Core be extended and linked.

The elements of the proposed Downtown bicycle network should be implemented, with one potential addition. While cycling should be accommodated and encouraged on Mississauga Street, Mississauga should be considered a "pedestrian-priority" street east of Albert Street. It should be designed and operated to encourage slow vehicular speeds through the historic core, so that most cyclists will feel safe sharing the travel lanes. To provide additional options for cyclists traveling east-west through Downtown, Colborne Street also should be considered for designation as a bicycle route. When Colborne is redesigned (see Initiative 19), bike lanes should be considered or, alternatively, wider curb lanes with "sharrows".



5.6

Create New Spaces Downtown for Playing, Gathering and Relaxing

Centennial Park and Couchiching Beach Park are remarkable waterfront open spaces, enjoyed by all Orillians year-round. Complementing them are local parks serving the neighbourhoods around Downtown.

Within the core, however, there aren't many green spaces, and Market Square is the lone civic space for gathering. As Downtown evolves to accommodate more residents and visitors, it will need more public open spaces. The extension of Centennial Drive to the south, with landscaped boulevards, will have the effect of extending the sense of waterfront open space to Pumpkin Bay and beyond, and there are opportunities to enhance the green space and amenities in Centennial Park. Council has already made a decision to develop outdoor recreation amenities on lands the City owns in the South Core. As more former industrial sites are transformed, an east-west green corridor will connect this parkland to the waterfront, and new neighbourhood parks will be created.



Figure 11: Initiatives 23-28

List of Projects

- 23/ Build a new pier and pavilion in Centennial Park
- 24/ Relocate waterfront parking and reduce boat ramp impacts
- 25/ Create a multi-use park at 255 West Street
- 26/ Enhance public access and boat club facilities at Pumpkin Bay
- 27/ Establish the Queen Street Greenway
- 28/ Develop small gathering spaces and neighbourhood parks

Legend

- study area
- parks and open spaces
- community parks and plazas
- water access
- park facilities
- - - trail network

23/ Build a New Square, Pier and Pavilion in Centennial Park

As inviting as Centennial Park is, there isn't a strong feature at the bottom of Mississauga Street that pulls people to the water's edge, provides a central gathering place and signals to boaters, "Here is wonderful Orillia!" A long pier at the foot of Mississauga, anchored by a civic square, would effectively extend the pedestrian experience of both the street and the park into the lake, establishing a destination all its own. The pier should be substantial enough to accommodate kiosks and shelters. Tour boats and other large vessels would dock along its sides.

At the Port of Orillia, at the foot of the future extension of Coldwater Street is another opportunity for a significant pavilion that accommodates facilities and amenities for visiting boaters and park users, including a restaurant, seasonal vendors, equipment rentals and washrooms. A tower element would provide a beacon and potentially a viewing platform, and this would be an appropriate location for a tourist information office.

The City should update the Centennial Park Master Plan to include a detailed plan and phasing strategy for these new waterfront destinations at the City's front door. The strategy should also include plans to modify the existing grading in the park to reduce or eliminate the soil berms that currently block views to the water from Centennial Drive.

24/ Relocate Waterfront Parking and Reduce Boat Ramp Impacts

Many people walk or bike to Centennial Park, but for many people the only way to get there is to drive. Parking is a necessity, but currently parking occupies large portions of the park, breaking up the flow of green space. By creating formal, paved parking lots on the City-owned land west of Centennial Drive, the City can eliminate much of the parking on the east side, replacing it with landscaping or other park amenities. A limited number of short-term parking spaces should be maintained near the water's edge and to service a future Tourist Information Centre.

The boat ramp in Centennial Park is valued by many in the community; however, when it's in heavy use, the impacts of traffic and trailer parking can diminish the experience for other users of the park. The City should take the following steps to reduce and manage boat ramp traffic:

- Permit only small boats under 17 feet to launch at the ramp.
- Restrict access to the ramp so that only one boat can launch at a time.
- Identify and create a "pay-and-display" boat trailer parking lot west of Centennial Drive or across from the water filtration plant.
- Prohibit trailer parking outside the designated boat trailer lot.
- Re-align the multi-use trail to reduce the potential for conflicts with ramp users

In time, as the waterfront becomes busier, the City should reconsider closing the ramp and replacing it with another facility on Lake Couchiching, potentially in Tudhope Park.



25/ Create a Multi-Use Park at 255 West Street S.

The City has plans to build a Multi-Use Park at the 255 West Street South that includes a range of much-needed outdoor recreation facilities and enhancements to the environmental areas surrounding Ben's Ditch. The park will draw visitors to Downtown from far and wide. By creating a healthier, more attractive environment in the South Core, it will also help to catalyze redevelopment on other former industrial sites in the area. The City should proceed with development of the park, taking a phased approach if necessary.

26/ Enhance Public Access and Boat Club Facilities at Pumpkin Bay

The Champlain Sailing Club currently leases land from the City on Pumpkin Bay. The club would like to improve its facilities, and the Orillia Rowing Club, currently located in Tudhope Park, is interested in relocating to the bay. Public access to the bay, to sit and enjoy the view at the water's edge and to launch a canoe or kayak, should also be improved.

The City, in collaboration with the sailing and rowing clubs, should prepare a detailed plan for the "Pumpkin Bay Look-out" that includes a pier, quay and/or additional docks for use by the clubs; a shared boat shed; a club house and public washroom building; a publicly accessible beach or ramp for launching non-motorized water craft; parking for club-member boats on trailers; parking for vehicles and bicycles; and benches and landscaping. The area occupied by the existing float plane hangar, and potentially the hangar itself, should be incorporated into the plan, which should be coordinated with plans for the south extension of Centennial Drive. The design of the facilities should address the security needs of the boat clubs.



27/ Establish the Queen Street Greenway

Creating a green open space corridor from the future Park at 255 West Street South to the waterfront will improve trail connections through Downtown, stormwater management in the area and the setting for neighbourhood development. It is also an opportunity to interpret and potentially restore the area's natural wetland heritage.

The functional and aesthetic characteristics of the Queen Street Greenway should be considered during preparation of the South Core Secondary Plan (see Initiative 04). Generally, the greenway should follow and incorporate the streetscape of Queen Street. East of Front Street, it should follow the existing trail and become a central feature of the redevelopment plans for the Rexton Property. Establishment of the greenway can proceed in advance of redevelopment in the area through naturalization of the existing ditch and tree planting within the right-of-way.

28/ Develop Small Gathering Spaces and Neighbourhood Parks

New residential development Downtown generally will be at higher densities than are found in the City's existing neighbourhoods. This means it will be especially important that new residents have access to public parks and other open spaces. Redevelopment of the South Core will need to include neighbourhood parks or parkettes, where children can play, dogs can run and neighbours can interact.

Downtown would also benefit from additional small-scale open spaces tucked into the urban fabric as places to rest but also as settings for cultural events and public art. A landscaped area with seating should be built at the front of the parking lot on Mississaga, between Peter and Matchedash. As other sites without heritage value are redeveloped, including the southwest corner of Mississaga and Andrew Street and the north side of Mississaga between Matchedash Street and Front Street, other small urban squares should be built. Such spaces should accommodate simple landscaping, moveable chairs and heritage interpretation and potentially outdoor patios for adjacent restaurants. The City may use the density bonusing provisions in the Official Plan to acquire urban squares, or some may be publicly accessible but privately owned.



5.7

Promote Orillia and Enhance the Visitor Experience

Orillia and its Downtown already have a lot to offer visitors, but many feel that the City has not tapped its true potential as a tourism destination. The City's message is not getting out there very far, or perhaps needs to be updated.

Although it is located at a crossroads, it's easy to skip Orillia. Travellers are not drawn into the Downtown, and if they go looking for it, they could find themselves lost or turned off by what they initially see. For those who discover the joys of Orillia and want to stay a while, the accommodation options, especially Downtown, are limited. Taking some relatively simple steps to attract more tourists will also help to attract new residents, businesses and investors.

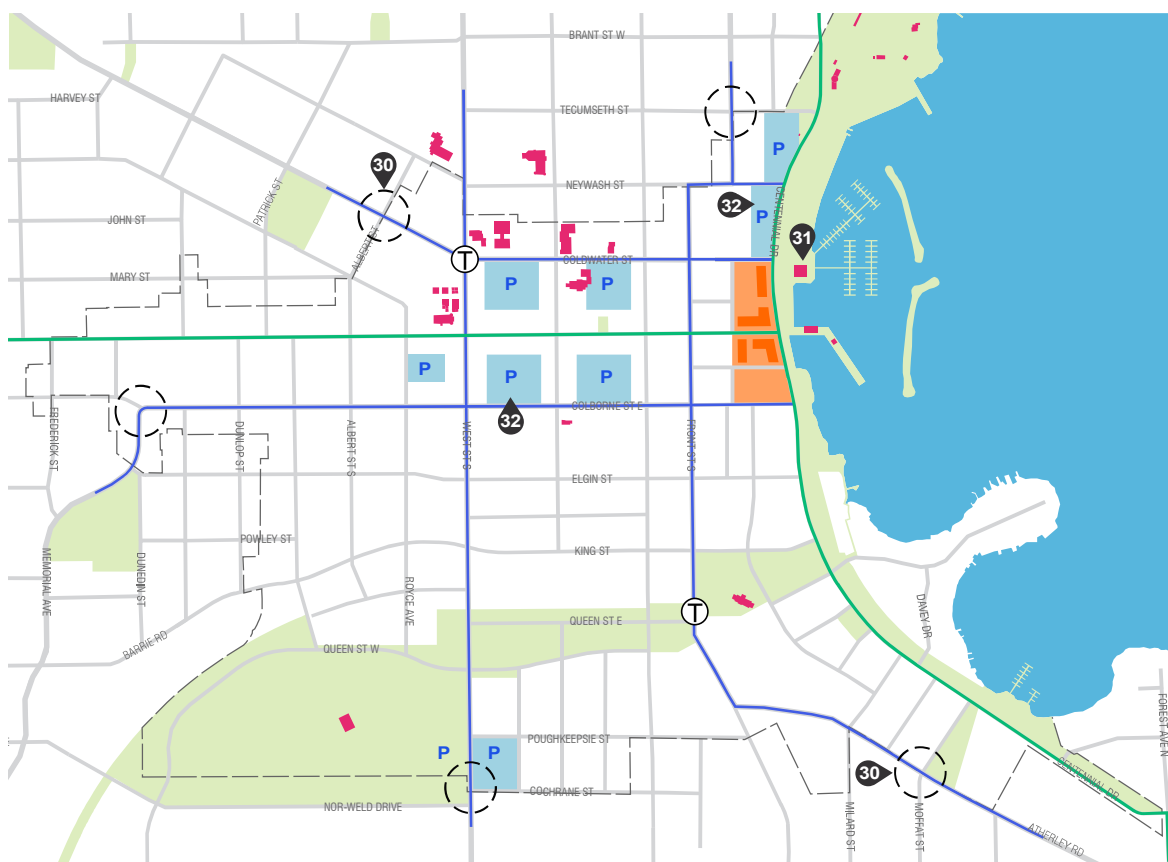


Figure 11: Initiatives 29-33

List of Projects

- 29/ Update Orillia's identity and branding *
- 30/ Erect new signage
- 31/ Relocate the tourist information centre
- 32/ Improve access to parking and the design of parking lots
- 33/ Target new hotels in the downtown (preferred sites) *

Legend

- study area
- special treatment streets
- major streets
- T transit facilities
- key parking areas
- preferred hotel sites
- landmarks
- Downtown Entry Points
- * initiatives not numbered on plan

29/ Update Orillia's Identity and Branding

Orillia is moving to reframe the Downtown experience with initiatives aimed at making it more attractive and compelling. Concurrent with these initiatives, it is important to determine if the City's current brand accurately and effectively communicates the values and ambitions of the City to its citizens, visitors, investors and neighbouring communities alike.

The Downtown Tomorrow Charrette offered the chance to explore the community's understanding of itself through various scenarios, and provided the opportunity for stimulating discussions about the future of Orillia. The next step is to prepare a "fifth scenario" for Orillia that incorporates feedback on the four scenarios presented at the Charrette. Additional feedback from key stakeholders will hone and focus the scenario which then becomes the descriptor for the brand ambition. At that point, the practical requirements of the brand are considered relative to the identity and communications needs. It is clear that Orillia needs an identity and communications strategy that reaches multiple audiences (tourists, economic development audience, citizens, neighbouring communities, etc.). This means that the brand architecture has to be well considered (sub-brands and related brands), and the key applications for the identity (signage, web, communications materials) will be important drivers of the design of the identity.

Once the requirements of the identity are clearly defined, several iterations would be provided to establish a design direction. Once a direction is established, the design would be refined and the key applications developed. Concurrent with the logo design, the messaging is developed and incorporated with the identity. This is important if there are multiple platforms for the identity so that all messaging is consistent and "singing from the same songbook". Furthering these discussions in the context of a brand exercise will provide the basis for a realistic scenario that captures the character of the City, its values and its ambition for the future. Developing an identity and communications strategy that responds to this scenario will be the key to developing a strong brand that captures the unique character and purpose of the City of Orillia.



30/ Erect New Signage

Directional signage to Downtown from Highway 11 and Highway 12 and within the City is severely lacking, and the signage that does exist leads visitors from the south through unattractive areas. Once the City has updated its brand, new signs should be designed that reflect the brand and indicate distances and directions to Downtown. Figure 11 identifies the recommended general locations for new directional signs along the primary entry streets.

Once visitors reach the edge of Downtown by car (or bicycle), additional signage should provide directions and distances to key destinations, including the Tourist Information Centre, Mississauga Street, the Waterfront, the Opera House, the Museum of Art and History, the Farmers' Market and public parking lots. Within Downtown, pedestrian-scale signs and maps should point the way to these and other landmarks. Maps highlighting and promoting key destinations (including retail establishments) should be installed in prominent locations next to major public parking lots, in Market Square, at the Port of Orillia and at the Hospital.

31/ Relocate the Tourist Information Centre

While the old train station is an appropriate building to house the Tourist Information Centre, the building's location in a former industrial area is less than ideal. Visitors from the south do not have an opportunity to gain a strong, positive impression of the City prior to arriving there. The best location for the centre would be at the Port of Orillia, which would cater to boat traffic and force enquiring visitors in vehicles to see the best parts of Downtown before deciding to stay or pass through. Tourist information kiosks or displays should also be located in the Metro store and the Liquor store to better catch transient visitors (boaters and cottagers) and encourage them to spend more time Downtown.



32/ Improve Access to Parking and the Design of Parking Lots

Downtown is not short of parking, but connections to parking lots from Mississauga Street are not always clear and direct. In addition to erecting signage to parking for drivers and pedestrians on each block along Mississauga (see Initiative 30), mid-block pedestrian connections, where they exist, should be highlighted at each end and lighted. Where redevelopment is proposed for a sizeable mid-block site containing a building that does not contribute to the street's historic character, the City should seek to accommodate or widen a pedestrian connection, if feasible.

Also where possible, the City should seek to consolidate public and private parking on a block to optimize the parking supply and minimize the impacts of parking lots and driveways on the public realm. Parking policies should ensure that at most times there is short-term parking available in the closest lots to Mississauga Street and longer-term employee parking occurs further away.

To enhance the image of Downtown and the pedestrian experience, parking lots should be paved, landscaped and lighted, as demonstrated by the lot on Colborne Street, between Peter Street and Matchedash Street.

33/ Target New Hotels in the Downtown

While Orillia overall does not appear to have a deficiency of hotel rooms, there are very limited accommodation options Downtown and no high-quality options. The City should work with developers to attract a hotel to the core. The ideal location would be one of the blocks fronting the Waterfront at the bottom of Mississauga Street and planned for redevelopment. The City should also provide financial incentives for the conversion of historic buildings to boutique hotels (see Initiative 02).







Section 6

The Actions

Implementation of the Downtown Plan will require steady and coordinated action by the City as well as other Downtown stakeholders. This final section of the plan assigns a timeframe to each of the initiatives described in Section 5 and identifies “Priority Actions” associated with each. The Priority Actions, summarized in Section 6.2, should be carried out in the next 2-5 years, in order to demonstrate the City’s belief in, and support for, Downtown revitalization.

While the Priority Actions cover many parts of Downtown, several of them are aimed at stimulating and guiding significant change at the east end of Mississauga Street, where the City’s core meets the water. It is here where a combination of public and private investments will have the most dramatic and enduring impact on the attractiveness and vitality of Downtown, and the city as a whole.

6.1

Implementation Matrix

The Downtown Strategic Master Plan is a 20-year plan. It will take at least that long to fully realize the major changes proposed for Downtown, as reflected in the Key Components of the vision, including widespread residential development, neighbourhood reinvestment and major public realm improvements. Significant changes, nevertheless, can and should occur in the short term, and the planning for most longer-term projects should also begin soon. Building momentum and maintaining excitement for change will be critical to the ongoing development of Downtown. Small successes make a difference and lead to bigger successes.

The matrix on the following pages, which spreads left to right across two pages, should be used to guide implementation of the Downtown Plan. It should inform the City's capital plan and operations budget to ensure appropriate resources are assigned to each project, recognizing the proposed timeframes for planning, design and construction. For the purposes of identifying the relative magnitude of each initiative, dollar signs have been used to identify smaller initiatives whose costs should be in the tens of thousands of dollars (or less), medium-size initiatives with likely costs in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and larger projects whose costs may be in the millions. Specific projects would need to be priced in much greater detail, through a project-specific detailed design process.

Since this section of the plan has a short-term focus, it should be reviewed and updated annually to respond to current opportunities and challenges, thereby remaining relevant.

#	Initiative	Timing			Magnitude	
		2-5 years	5-10 years	10+ years		
Increase the Residential Population Downtown						
01	Facilitate waterfront development					\$\$\$
02	Encourage upper-storey residential conversions					\$\$
03	Encourage and support neighbourhood improvement					\$\$
04	Prepare secondary plan for south core					\$\$
Reinforce Downtown as a Civic and Institutional Hub						
05	Replace the OPP Detachment Building					\$\$\$
06	Build a leisure and wellness centre					\$\$\$
07	Develop shared academic facilities					\$\$\$
08	Encourage improvements to Soldiers' Memorial Hospital					\$\$\$
09	Relocate City Hall					\$\$\$

Legend

	\$	\$0 - 100,000
	\$\$	\$100,000 - 1,000,000
	\$\$\$	\$1,000,000+

Priority Actions	Project Lead/ Partnerships	Related Projects
- Hire a Manager of Downtown Development to spearhead and coordinate implementation of the Downtown Plan - Seek to acquire strategic properties - Prepare plans for utility infrastructure relocation projects: - Trunk sewer - Hydro line - Facilitate Developers' Roundtable to promote opportunities and discuss potential initiatives - Review and amend Official Plan - Prepare Community Improvement Plan	City - Corporate Services City City - Public Works City - EcDev/ Planning City - Planning City - Planning	Mississauga Street Improvements Centennial Drive Improvements Centennial Park Improvements - square, pier and pavilion
Prepare Community Improvement Plan	City - Planning	
- Prepare Community Improvement Plan - Enforce Property Standards By-law - Prepare Neighbourhood Tree Planting Program	City - Planning City - Buildings City - Public Works	
Prepare secondary plan	City - Planning	Queen Street Greenway West Street Park
Complete review of policing options	City Council	
- Initiate City/Lakehead/Georgian/Soldiers' Hospital working group to explore partnership opportunities - Develop a building program, select a Downtown site and design the facility	City, Lakehead, Georgian, SMH City, Lakehead, Georgian, SMH	
None		
Prepare hospital master plan	SMH	
None		

#	Initiative	Timing			Magnitude
		2-5 years	5-10 years	10+ years	

Celebrate Downtown's Cultural Heritage and Activity

10	Adopt the HCD Plan and protect significant heritage properties				\$
11	Relocate the Farmers' Market				\$
12	Establish the Leacock Centre for the Arts				\$\$ - \$\$\$
13	Facilitate living, working and event space for artists				\$ - \$\$\$

Improve the Shopping and Dining Experience Downtown

14	Attract Speciality Retailers				\$
15	Coordinate shopping hours				\$
16	Maintain and improve storefronts				\$\$
17	Extend the retail experience to the waterfront				\$\$\$

Legend

	\$	\$0 - 100,000
	\$\$	\$100,000 - 1,000,000
	\$\$\$	\$1,000,000+

Priority Actions	Project Lead/ Partnerships	Related Projects
• Adopt the HCD Plan • Identify priority buildings for designation and pursue heritage designations	City Council City - Culture	
• Relocate the Farmers' Market to Market Square	City, Farmers' Market	
• Develop first year program for the centre	Lakehead	
• Prepare Community Improvement Plan • Program mini cultural events downtown	City - Planning City - Culture, DOMB	
• Complete inventory of existing retail and available space • Develop a promotional package for targeted retailers and seek out desirable retailers	DOMB DOMB	
• Coordinate shopping hours among BIA members	DOMB	
• Adopt the HCD Plan	City Council	Mississauga streetscape improvements
• Permit and encourage seasonal street vendors east of Front Street	City, DOMB	Private waterfront development

#	Initiative	Timing			Magnitude
		2-5 years	5-10 years	10+ years	

Improve Connectivity and Streetscapes Downtown

18	Upgrade and enhance Mississauga Street				\$\$\$
19	Beautify Coldwater Street and other key entry streets				\$\$\$
20	Redesign and extend Centennial Drive				\$\$\$
21	Build new streets to the waterfront				\$\$\$
22	Identify the downtown bicycle network				\$

Create New Spaces Downtown for Playing, Gathering and Relaxing

23	Build a new square, pier and pavilion in Centennial Park					\$\$\$
24	Relocate waterfront parking and reduce boat ramp impacts					\$\$
25	Create a multi-use park at 255 West Street					\$\$\$
26	Enhance public access and boat club facilities at Pumpkin Bay					\$\$
27	Establish the Queen Street greenway					\$\$\$
28	Develop small gathering spaces and neighbourhood parks					\$ - \$\$

Legend

\$ \$0 - 100,000

Pre-development \$\$\$ \$100,000 - 1,000,000

\$\$ \$100,000 - 1,000,000

Development \$\$\$\$ \$1,000,000+

\$\$\$ \$1,000,000+

Priority Actions	Project Lead/ Partnerships	Related Projects
Prepare Mississaga streetscape design	City - Public Works	Storefront improvements Development of small urban squares along Mississaga Street Upper-storey conversions
Prepare street tree program for Downtown entry streets	City - Public Works	
- Prepared detailed waterfront public realm plan - Prepare detailed design for Phase 1 realignment and improvements - Coldwater to Colborne	City - Public Works City - Public Works	Centennial Park improvements - square, pier and pavilion Waterfront parking relocation Relocation of utilities (sewer, hydro) Private waterfront development
Amend Official Plan to include additional “viewsapes”	City - Planning, Public Works Private Developers	Private waterfront development
Erect signs identifying designated bike routes	City - Public Works	
Prepared detailed waterfront public realm plan	City - Parks, Public Works	Centennial Drive redesign and extension Waterfront parking relocation Private waterfront development
- Prepared detailed waterfront public realm plan - Establish and charge fee for boat ramp use	City - Parks City - Parks	Centennial Drive redesign and extension
- Prepare master plan for the park - Initiate tree planting program for the park	City - Parks City - Parks	South Core secondary plan
Prepared detailed waterfront public realm plan	City - Parks	Centennial Drive extension
Prepare South Core secondary plan	City - Planning	
- Create landscaped open space with seating at parking lot on Mississaga Street - Prepare Mississaga streetscape design - Prepare South Core secondary plan	City - Public Works City - Public Works City - Planning	Mississaga streetscape improvements

Priority Actions	Project Lead/ Partnerships	Related Projects
Update Orillia's branding and identity	City - EcDev, Communications	Directional signage
- Update Orillia's branding and identity - Design, build and install new directional signs on highways and entry streets	City - EcDev, Communications City - EcDev, Public Works	
Prepared detailed waterfront public realm plan	City - Parks, EcDev	
Erect new directional signs to parking for drivers and pedestrians	City - Public Works	
Facilitate Developers' Roundtable to promote opportunities and discuss potential incentives	City - EcDev	Private waterfront development

What are Priority Actions? They are the critical first steps, and in some cases the only step, required to implement many of the planned initiatives described in Section 5.

6.2

20 Things to Do in the Next 2 Years

Below are the top fifteen **Priority Actions** the City should pursue in the next two years to advance the identified initiatives described in Section 5:

- 1/ Hire a Manager of Downtown Development to spearhead and coordinate implementation of the Downtown Plan (Initiative 01)
- 2/ Adopt the Heritage Conservation District Plan and initiate designation of significant heritage properties (Initiatives 10 and 16)
- 3/ Seek to acquire strategic properties on the waterfront (Initiative 01)
- 4/ Prepare a Community Improvement Plan with a range of development incentives (Initiatives 01, 02, 03 and 13)
- 5/ Review and amend the Official Plan to align it with the guidelines in the Downtown Plan and incorporate additional viewsapes (Initiatives 01 and 21)
- 6/ Prepared a detailed waterfront public realm plan to guide the design of Centennial Drive, a new square, pier and pavilion in Centennial Park, and improvements at Pumpkin Bay (Initiative 20, 23, 24, 26 and 31)
- 7/ Facilitate a Developers' Roundtable to promote development opportunities and discuss potential incentives (Initiatives 01 and 33))
- 8/ Erect signs identifying designated bicycle routes Downtown (Initiative 22)
- 9/ Relocate the Farmers' Market to Market Square (Initiative 11)
- 10/ Update Orillia's branding and identity (Initiatives 29 and 30)
- 11/ Design, build and install new directional signs to Downtown on the highways and entry streets (Initiatives 30 and 32)
- 12/ Create a landscaped "pocket square" with seating at the parking lot on Mississauga Street, between Peter Street and Matchedash Street (Initiative 28)
- 13/ Establish a "pay-and-display" parking lot for boat trailers and restrict usage of the boat ramp in Centennial Park (Initiative 24)
- 14/ Initiate City/Lakehead/Georgian/Soldiers' Hospital working group to explore partnership opportunities (Initiative 06)
- 15/ Prepare plans for utility infrastructure relocation projects on the waterfront (trunk sewer and hydro line) (Initiative 01)

Below are five other top **Priority Actions** to be led by others:

- 16/ Program mini cultural events and street entertainers (DOMB/City) (Initiative 13)
- 17/ Complete inventory of existing retail and available space (DOMB) (Initiative 14)
- 18/ Develop a promotional package for targeted retailers and seek out desirable retailers (DOMB) (Initiative 14)
- 19/ Coordinate shopping hours among BIA members (DOMB) (Initiative 15)
- 20/ Develop the first year program for the proposed Leacock Centre for the Arts (Lakehead) (Initiative 12)

Acknowledgements

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Thank you to all City staff, Downtown stakeholders and Orillia citizens who participated in the Downtown Tomorrow initiative. The plan is now in your hands.

