

# **Atikokan Waterfront Development Plan**

**Final Report**

**October, 1991**

**Prepared for:**

**Township of Atikokan**

**Prepared by:**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Atikokan Waterfront Plan was prepared with the involvement and assistance of many people. Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates would like to thank the members of the Project Steering Committee, Township of Atikokan Council and staff, Atikokan Economic Development Corporation, Bunnell Park Committee, Mining Theme Attraction Committee, Atikokan Beautification Committee, Ministry of Natural Resources and other members of the public for their contributions.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Township of Atikokan, as part of its overall strategy to promote economic growth and revitalize the community, decided in 1990 to undertake a study which would examine opportunities for developing and enhancing the Atikokan River Waterfront. In undertaking the study the Township recognized the potential of the Atikokan River to become, through sound planning, a major recreation and tourism attraction and a stimulus to local economic activity.

To assist with the preparation of a plan for the waterfront the Township retained Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates Landscape Architects & Planners. Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates worked with the Township Council and staff, the Project Steering Committee and various interest groups over 11 months examining community issues and objectives, assessing development opportunities and preparing proposals for project development. This report presents these proposals and summarizes the major findings of the study.

The waterfront development study is very timely as the waterfront plan has potential to pull together and coordinate several projects which are all in the planning or early development stages. For example, the proposed Mining Theme Attraction includes development of a visitor and interpretive centre in the downtown area. There is a tremendous opportunity to coordinate the planning and design of this facility with the development of the waterfront and the proposed marina, historic park, seniors housing, library and museum.

There is an urgent need for coordinated waterfront development, particularly considering the timing and potential impact of the Voyageur Heritage Waterway project. The project involves improvements to the Atikokan River and the Seine River water



courses to allow the passage of up to 24 foot length motor boats from Atikokan to Fort Frances and then on to Minaki, north of Kenora. It will also provide access to the waterway system by boat owners in the Crane Lake system of Northern Minnesota. A feasibility study for this project was submitted in February, 1989 and a detailed engineering study is near completion.

Many of the existing and potential attractions to Atikokan are located in close proximity to the river. Enhancement of the Atikokan River with walkways, docking, landscaping and other development will provide an appealing setting for visitors and will leave them with a very positive image of Atikokan. At present, however, much of the Atikokan River appears neglected and uninviting. Opportunities for residents and visitors to get down to the water or move along its banks are few. The river has tremendous undeveloped potential to become a dominant recreation and aesthetic feature in the community.

The plan for the waterfront promotes visual and physical linkages between the river and the core commercial district. These linkages will enhance the image of the commercial area and will encourage visitors to Atikokan to explore more of the community. To support this, the waterfront plan also proposed major improvements to the streets and businesses in the core area.

It is hoped that waterfront redevelopment will become a catalyst for private sector investment. It can do this in several ways: by creating a more positive image for the community; by creating opportunities for new business and business expansion (eg. marina, canoe rentals); by increasing visitation to Atikokan by tourists to the region; and by extending the length of time visitors stay in the community.

Adoption of the waterfront plan and implementation of the proposed development program will contribute significantly to the quality of life in Atikokan and become a focus of pride for residents.

## 2. PROJECT OBJECTIVES

At a meeting with the Atikokan Waterfront Development Committee on November 27, 1990, the following objectives were established for the project:

1. Provide recreation facilities for residents
  - park system, trails, linkage to other projects.
2. Develop the waterfront for tourism
  - as a secondary attraction for tourists visiting other primary attractions in the region (eg. fishing lodges, Quetico Park).
  - develop family oriented activities
  - develop day-use activities.
3. Develop a destination campground and other destination accommodation.
4. Develop Atikokan as a destination and starting point for the Voyageur Heritage Waterway.
5. The waterfront project should tie-in/enhance/coordinate other projects underway in Atikokan (ie Mining Theme Attraction, Bunnell Park).
6. Revitalize the Atikokan River waterfront to provide an aesthetically pleasing amenity which will enhance the community's image for residents and visitors.

7. Plan waterfront development to maximize economic benefits for the community.
  - provide opportunities for new commercial ventures.
  - enhance and strengthen existing business.
8. Develop a plan for the waterfront which keeps on-going operational costs at realistic levels.
9. Develop a plan which takes advantage of available sources of funding.

### **3. SITE ANALYSIS**

This section of the report provides a summary of site analysis undertaken by Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates including biophysical characteristics of the waterfront, land use, land ownership and visual character.

#### **3.1 Water Quality**

The Province of Ontario maintains no uniform standards for recreational water quality. Generally, however, a faecal coliform count of less than 10 per 100 ml of water is considered satisfactory for bathing beach areas. Raw bacterial data were examined for a period of two years (1988-89/1989-90) from the Atikokan River at Little Falls. Generally, samples indicated a bacterial population of less than 10/100 ml, however moderately elevated faecal coliform counts were recorded during the months of June, July and August. (Faecal Coliform counts ranged as high as 44/100 ml of water). However, these levels were less than 200 faecal coliform/100 ml which is the level at which the water may be considered a health hazard for water contact recreation.

#### **3.2 Bathing**

There are no designated bathing areas along the Atikokan River. Some residents (primarily youths) swim above and below Little Falls, however, most residents travel to several different nearby lakes for bathing. A bathing area was proposed for the Oxbow Lake at Bunnell Park in the Bunnell Park Plan (Knox, Martin, Kretch Limited, September 1973). Work began on development of this pond in 1990 but was halted by the OMNR due to concerns about impact on fisheries. A plan has been proposed to develop a bathing area in conjunction with site development of Minnow Pond, located near the airport.

### 3.3 Flows

The Water Survey of Canada maintains a water recorder gauging station on the Atikokan River below Little Falls where the contributing drainage area is 332 square kilometres. Monthly and annual mean discharge data have been collected for the stations operating period of record (1978-89).

A continuous monthly record only exists for 5 years (1984-88), nevertheless a figure of 3.08 cubic metres per second was derived as the annual mean discharge. Annual extremes of discharge for the period of record also exist. The extreme minimum daily discharge for the period of record occurred in 1987 on July 6 where a flow of 0.47 cubic metres per second was recorded. The existence of such low flows pose significant problems for navigation on the Atikokan River within the town boundaries, particularly upstream of Front Street.

Not only is low water flow a problem but too much water due to flooding is also a concern. Historically, the Atikokan River has flooded the Town of Atikokan on three occasions. In 1950, White, West, and Front Streets were inundated along with sections of the CNR track and O'Neills Trailer Park. In 1956, an earth dam burst across the west arm of Steep Rock Lake backing up the Atikokan River to a height 385.9 metres at the White Street Bridge. As a result, Town Council passed a by-law establishing 387 metres as the lowest level on which structures could be built. In 1964, water levels rose again flooding several homes west of O'Brien Street and the Midtown Trailer Park. Recent events of flooding have also occurred. In 1982, the water level rose 1 metre, flooding Little Falls Road due to the collapse of a beaver dam.

A flood risk area for the Atikokan River has been determined within the built-up portion of the Township. This area is defined on maps available from the Township of

Atikokan, Conservation Authorities and Water Management Branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Inland Waters Directorate of Environment Canada. The flood risk area has been zoned as hazard land in the Atikokan zoning by-law. Construction of permanent structures within the flood risk area is strictly regulated.

### **3.4 Navigation**

The Atikokan River meanders through the town of Atikokan for a length of 8.5 km. The river is relatively narrow being no more than 6 metres wide within the town proper. Shallow water depth along the banks of the river limit the effective boat channel to about 3 metres width in many sections.

The winding and narrow channel limits the size of boats which can use the river and the speed of boat travel. Visibility on the water is limited by the meandering channel, vegetation and high river banks. On-coming boats will have difficulty passing on certain stretches of the river.

The river is navigable by small outboard motor boat, although during periods of low flow shallow water depth can impede navigation. Two old check dams downstream of Front Street present a hazard to navigation. The Atikokan to Minaki Waterway Feasibility Study (Hough Stansbury and Woodland Ltd.) proposed that work be undertaken to improve the channel for navigation including: dredging the river above Front Street to the Museum site to deepen the channel by a foot; and constructing a low weir at Tracy Rapids to maintain a 385 metre water elevation in the river.

A number of the pedestrian and vehicular bridges in town present potential limitations to river navigation. The White Street bridge has a very low clearance and several of the bridges provide only a narrow channel between structural supports (eg.

O'Brien Street bridge). Raising the river elevation in town will increase the problem of clearance under several bridges.

### 3.5 Riverbank Character

For much of its length the river meanders through a broad floodplain where the banks of the river are about 1.5 to 2 metres above the water level. Alternately, some sections of the river such as in the vicinity of the museum/library are characterized by higher (4.5 metres), steeper banks. Undercutting of these banks by the river is occurring in several locations, however, the majority of riverbank appears stable.

Vegetation along the river is varied and includes areas of native woodland, areas of disturbed vegetation cover and landscaped areas dominated by turf grass. Native forest cover includes stands of aspen, white birch, jack pine and white spruce on better drained sites and black spruce and willow dominated forest within low lying portions of the floodplain. There are several small areas of marsh along the main channel. A large wetland area is located north of the main channel and west of O'Brien Street. An oxbow lake, marsh complex is located at Bunnell Park but has been affected by dredging and filling.

Significant portions of the floodplain show signs of disturbance by clearing and burning. These areas are characterized by sparse tree cover and long grasses.

The Historical Park, museum/library precinct and Centennial Park are characterized by mown turf grass with native and horticultural plantings.

Most of the riverbank is typically supporting a cover of grasses and forbs growing to a height of 1 metre or more. There does not appear to be any section of the river where a formal landscape treatment has been applied up to the waters edge.



There are several areas of land adjacent to the river which are low lying and poorly drained, making access to the riverbank difficult.

### **3.6 Fisheries**

There is no recent data on fish populations in the Atikokan River, however, old fish survey records indicate the presence of such game species as walleye and northern pike as well as brown bullhead and white sucker. The federal government has recently adopted tougher policies and regulations to protect fish habitat nationwide. In effect, this policy requires that there shall be "no net loss" of fish habitat resulting from any new development or construction project. In other words if a project causes loss of fish habitat mitigative measures are required to restore or replace the lost habitat so that the total "quantity" of habitat remains the same. These regulations will apply to any development on the Atikokan River.

### **3.7 Land Use**

The study area along the Atikokan River has been classified into associated land uses, complimented by development policies in the Official Plan for the Township of Atikokan. Policies that could apply to floodplain development along waterfront areas in the urban zone relate to hazard lands and sensitive areas, open space, associated cultural, recreational public institutions and commercial residential developments. Regulations to enforce these general provisions are set out in the Township of Atikokan By-law whereby the town is defined and described according to various zones. Within these zones, only certain uses are permitted. Lands zoned as hazard lands and sensitive areas, open space, institutional and commercial/residential are of significance for waterfront development.

### **3.7.1 General Provisions**

In all areas, appropriate buffering between different land uses is required, as set out in the Official Plan, in order to maintain the highest level of enjoyment. Before any recreational development can proceed along the waterfront, assessments of the social, economic and environmental impacts are required. Further, any development on lands that may be subject to flooding, but not yet delineated as such by the Ministry of Natural Resources, would require further evaluation. Otherwise, the Plan states that such flood prone lands are not to be developed unless there is confirmation with the applicable land use policies and zoning regulations.

### **3.7.2 Hazard Land and Sensitive Areas**

Areas designated as hazard land and sensitive areas have been identified in order to prevent any high risk development. The Official Plan specifies, under section 1.5.9.3, that hazard lands or sensitive areas defined by the Ministry of Natural Resources as a floodplain, should not be developed for residential use. Low intensive recreational activities, such as walking or biking, are allowed. There is provision for expansion of existing facilities as long as there is no obstruction to river flow or decrease in storage volume of the floodplains. Such developments are also covered under the Official Plan, section 2.3.6, under storm drainage.

Land zoned as hazard land or sensitive area under the By-law has provision for such uses as public and private parks, existing uses, boat landings and various recreational activities. Only certain structures and buildings are permitted under this designation. This includes docks, public works buildings and bridges and culverts.

### **3.7.3 Open Space**

The intent of the Official Plan for Atikokan is not to actively establish or prevent development of new park facilities. However, section 3.1.8 does state that "every effort will be made to create and maintain a continuous system of open space in lands adjacent to the Atikokan River". This includes lands designated as hazard land and sensitive areas.

Under the By-law, in any zone defined or described as open space, permitted uses include such things as conservation areas, golf courses, nurseries, tree farms, recreational public and private park space and associated accessory facilities.

### **3.7.4 Institutional**

This designation relates to local and regional cultural, recreational and public facilities that are adjacent to existing open areas. Under the Official Plan, these facilities, as much as possible, are to be designed to harmonize with the character of the area. Permitted uses under the By-law include schools, playgrounds, museums and cultural/historic sites.

## **3.8 Land Tenure**

The majority of land ownership along the Atikokan River is under Township jurisdiction. There is a 20 metre wide Township Reserve along both banks of the River between the MacKenzie Avenue bridge and Saturn Avenue bridge. Other parcels of public property are scattered throughout the study area, generally within the confines of the hazard land and sensitive area zone. This public land provides the Township the ability to control development along the river and creates significant opportunities for linear park development.

The remaining property along the river corridor is under private ownership, with

much of it being occupied by single family residential housing. Some of the owners of riverside properties have undertaken improvements on adjacent public lands, maintaining the property to the waters edge. These residents may have concerns about loss of privacy and impact on improvements resulting from development of trails and other public uses along the river corridor.

An additional note to land tenure concerns. A parcel of public land transferred to the Township of Atikokan from the Canadian Legion British Empire Service League for the purposes of a Historic Park/Museum site. In the agreement between the two parties, if any change in use of this property is contemplated, agreement must be secured from the previous owner. This would apply to any waterfront development (eg. marina) on this site.

### **3.8.1 Encroachments**

A number of private land owners along the River are making use of adjacent parcels of public riverbank for a variety of activities including vegetable gardens, materials storage, private yards. In several locations structures have been built which encroach on the public land including fences, sheds and houses. At several locations derelict vehicles and other debris have been deposited on the public riverbank and are reducing the aesthetic quality of some sections of the River.

### **3.9 Visual Analysis**

There are many sections of the Atikokan River which exhibit high or moderately high scenic values. The Little Falls area and other stretches of the river with mature native vegetation are particularly scenic. Certain of the pedestrian vehicular bridges provide attractive views of the river. There are few formal scenic lookouts. The Little Falls lookout

is poorly developed and the aesthetics of the site are limited by the presence of the old pumphouse building.

While limited views to the river are possible from the roadways entering the Town (Highway 622 and Mackenzie Avenue) these views are not particularly appealing.

The undeveloped sections of the river provide an attractive visual setting for residential areas adjacent to the floodplain. These undeveloped sections also have potential for scenic walkways.

Some land uses along the river have negative aesthetic impacts. These include a number of industrial-type land uses, and storage yards. One of the worst offenders is the lands adjacent to the Public Works yard by Mercury Avenue where the Township has been dumping fill and debris.

The appearance and condition of most of the bridges do not contribute positively to the visual character of the corridor. With upgrading and/or replacement these many bridges could become a very appealing feature of the waterfront.

## Implications

The following are the major implications of the site analysis findings for the waterfront plan:

- i) Water quality in the river is generally good and exceeds guidelines for recreational water quality.
- ii) Although the quality of the river is adequate for bathing there are no designated bathing areas on the river. Bathing is limited either by shallow water, fast current or unsatisfactory shoreline and/or riverbottom conditions.
- iii) Significant areas of land adjacent to the River are designated as flood risk area and are unsuitable for development of permanent structures.
- iv) Navigation on the River is restricted by low flows, shallow water, narrow channel width, poor visibility and low bridge clearance.
- v) Access to the riverbank is limited in some areas by poorly drained and wet soils. There are some sections of steep riverbank which are eroding and showing signs of instability. Travel along the riverbank is difficult to impossible along these sections.
- vi) Most of the riverbank and floodplain is zoned as openspace or hazard land intended for low intensity public use. Much of the adjacent land is zoned and developed for residential use.

- v) The Township of Atikokan owns almost all of the land along the banks of the Atikokan River as well as significant blocks of adjacent land. This presents a major opportunity (seldom found in other municipalities) to develop a linked openspace and recreational trail system.
- vi) Private encroachments on the riverbank could be affected by development of public parkland and trails along the riverbank.
- vii) Dumping along the river bank by residents, business and the Township is reducing the attractiveness of some sections of the river.
- viii) Some sections of the Atikokan River which are relatively undisturbed and support diverse stands of native vegetation are very scenic. Access to these areas is often limited by lack of developed pathways or roads.

#### **4. WATERFRONT SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

Atikokan currently has minimal services and facilities for waterfront and river users. There are no businesses in town specializing in motorboat rentals, motorboat service or marine fuel sales although most tourist resorts in the area offer boat rentals and fuel sales. There is one canoe/back country outfitting operation in town and three or four more in the area outside of town.

A boat launch is located at the foot of Front Street, however, the launch is undeveloped, and lacks parking and other support facilities. There is no public docking in town.

There are very few, if any, businesses in the community which make use of the river as part of their operation. Very few service-oriented businesses are actually located along the river. Those that are adjacent to the river (eg. Radisson Motel, White Otter Inn) have not taken advantage of their locations to provide views, access or river-oriented amenities.

#### **Tourist Services and Facilities**

Atikokan offers most services and facilities required or desired by the visitors. There are 4 hotels/motels within town offering a total of 80 rooms. Two of these facilities are rated 3 star motels, the other facilities are unrated. In addition, there are 4 resorts in the area with access to the Seine River system. These resorts offer a total of 20 cabins and 10 rooms. Two of these resorts are 3 star rated. There are 12 restaurants in town offering a variety of food and beverage services. There are 9 automobile fuel and/or repair shops.

Other tourist services available in Atikokan are summarized in Figure 1.



Figure 1  
Tourist Services and Facilities

	<u>Number of Establishments</u>
Accommodation	4
Restaurants	12
Auto Repairs/Fuel	9
Backcountry Outfitting	1
Food Stores	7
Liquor Stores	1
Drug Stores	1
Hardware Stores	4
Gift Shops	1
Hospital	1
Clinics	2
Police	Yes
Golf	Yes
Recreation Centre	Yes
Campground	Yes

## **Implications**

- A few businesses in Atikokan are located so that they can take advantage of the river as an amenity, however, there is generally a lack of water-oriented services and business in town.
- Atikokan offers the basic tourist services and facilities required by visitors.
- Development of the Voyageurs Heritage waterway will create demand for water-oriented services currently not available in Atikokan including: boat rentals, water service, marine fuel sales, boat charters, guiding and tours.
- There is a need to increase linkages between the waterfront and existing core area businesses.

## **5. EXISTING WATERFRONT INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **5.1 Bridges**

There are five pedestrian bridges and four vehicular bridges crossing the Atikokan River between Front Street and Highway 622. The condition of the pedestrian bridges is variable ranging from acceptable to poor. Clearance under two of these bridges is quite low and presents a potential restriction to local traffic. All of the pedestrian bridges are exposed to potential damage during flood.

### **5.2 Pathways**

There is a discontinuous system of pathways along the river corridor including paths which provide access to and from the pedestrian bridges. Path surfacing includes concrete, asphalt, gravel and bare earth. Most pathways are not provided with pedestrian lighting. There is a lack of directional signage.

### **5.3 Parklands**

There are a number of public parks and open space areas along the river corridor including the White Street Ball Park, Centennial Park, Historical Park, Library/Museum area, tennis courts, Bunnell Park, Atikokan Golf Course and Little Falls Lookout. The appearance and level of maintenance of these parks is mixed. Some of the parks present a ragged and unkempt appearance to the visitor despite the fact that portions of these parks are well maintained. There is a lack of directional signage and information.

### **Implications**

- the pedestrian and vehicular bridges, pathways and open space areas provide

excellent potential for a network of walking and bicycling routes through town.

- There is a need to improve directional and information signage for visitors.
- There is potential within existing park areas to provide a greater variety of recreation facilities for residents and visitors.
- Parks and open space areas should be upgraded to present a more attractive and cohesive appearance.
- Areas of native vegetation could be managed to maintain a more attractive forest cover (eg. limit burning).

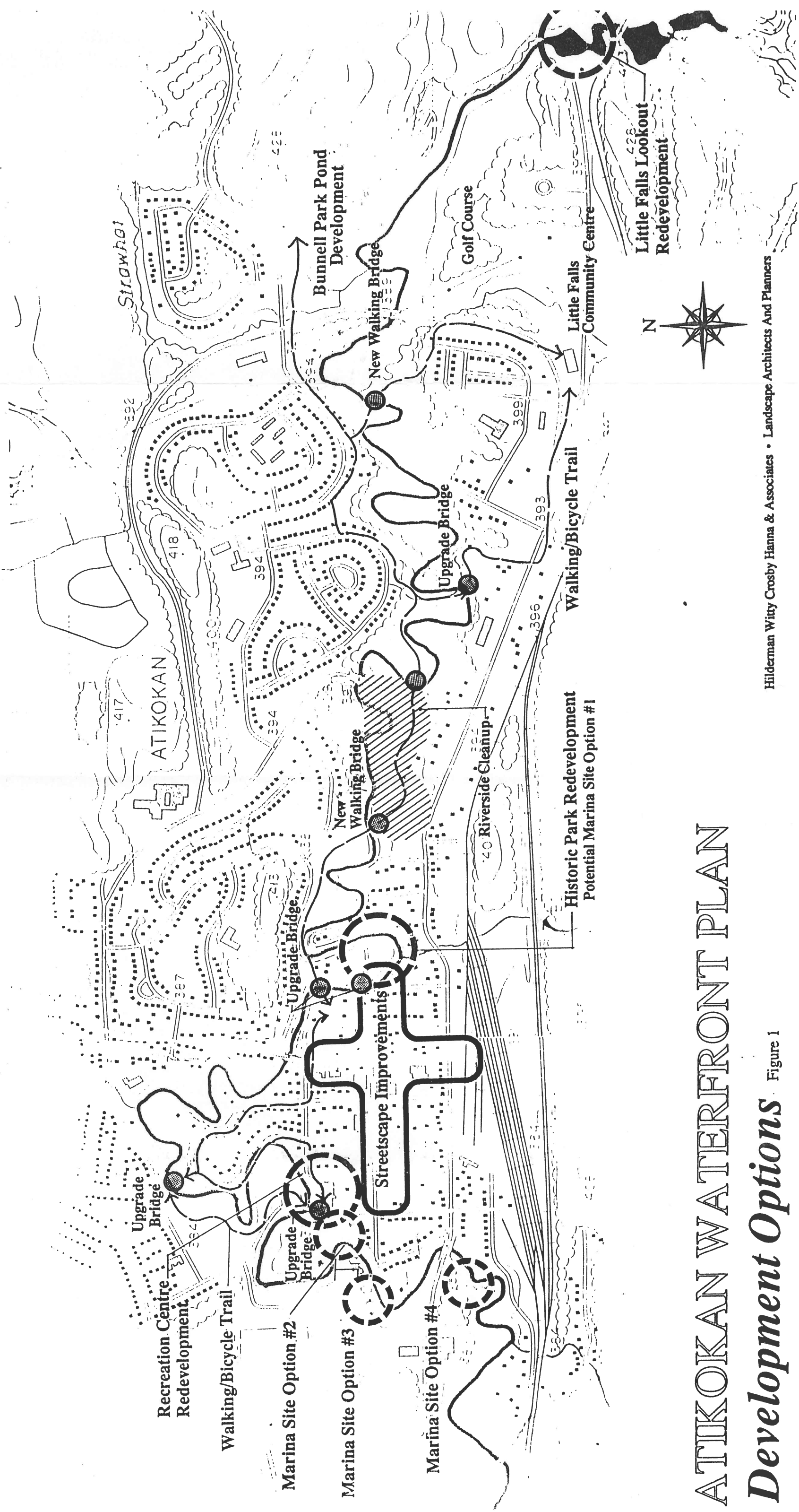
## **6. DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS**

This section outlines options and opportunities for development associated with the Atikokan River Waterfront.

### **6.1 Marina Development**

Development of a marina in Atikokan was proposed in the "Atikokan-Minaki Waterway Study" to provide boat launching and docking facilities for future users of the Voyageur Heritage Waterway. This study determined that the preferred location of the marina would be in the downtown area within easy walking distance of core area businesses and services. The site proposed for the marina in the study was on Armstrong Point (Legion Point) adjacent to the Historical Park museum. Based on an examination of the proposed marina concept and analysis of land use, land tenure and bio-physical factors Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates believe that there are other downtown area sites which may be more suitable for this development. Marina concept plans were prepared for three alternative sites and a revised concept was prepared for the Armstrong Point site.

The advantages and disadvantages of each site alternative were examined and reviewed with the Steering Committee. The Committee members who were present at the meeting decided that plans for three alternative sites (options 1, 2 and 3) should be presented to Council, various interest groups and the general public for comment. The Committee members decided that site option 4 did not have sufficient merit to justify further consideration. The alternative site plans are included below with a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each concept.



# ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT PLAN

## *Development Options*

Figure 1

## MARINA SITE DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

### OPTION 1 - ARMSTRONG POINT

#### Advantages

- Central location - easy walking distance to Main Street
- Main visitor access to site via O'Brien Street and through Downtown area
- backshore is outside of the flood risk area

#### Disadvantages

- extra 3.4 kilometres of channel improvements required
- 2 bridges would need upgrading to allow safe boat passage
- intended use of site is for historical park/museum (agreement between Township and Legion)
- marina development limits site available for historic displays

### OPTION 2 - WHITE STREET AT ARENA

#### Advantages: Option 2a

- existing parking lots - multi season use
- reasonably close to downtown, potential to develop streetscaping link
- visitor access to site could be directed through downtown area
- enhances existing recreation/park area

#### Disadvantages: Option 2a

- 4 parcels of private property limit potential backshore development - (residences at this location are within the flood risk area)
- existing houses should be purchased/relocated

#### Advantages: Option 2b

- same as Option 2a
- plus avoids requirement to buy private land

Disadvantages: Option 2b

- boat launch requires relocation of horseshoe pits and clubhouse
- boat launch area conflicts with ballfield

OPTION 3 - WEST RIVERBANK NORTH OF MACKENZIE  
AVENUE BRIDGE

Advantages

- all property is owned by the Township
- plenty of space for backshore development
- walking access to Main Street via pedestrian bridge

Disadvantages

- located on west bank of river: further from downtown - pedestrian bridge over river required
- vehicle access to site not through centre of town

OPTION 4 - MACKENZIE AVENUE WEST OF RIVER

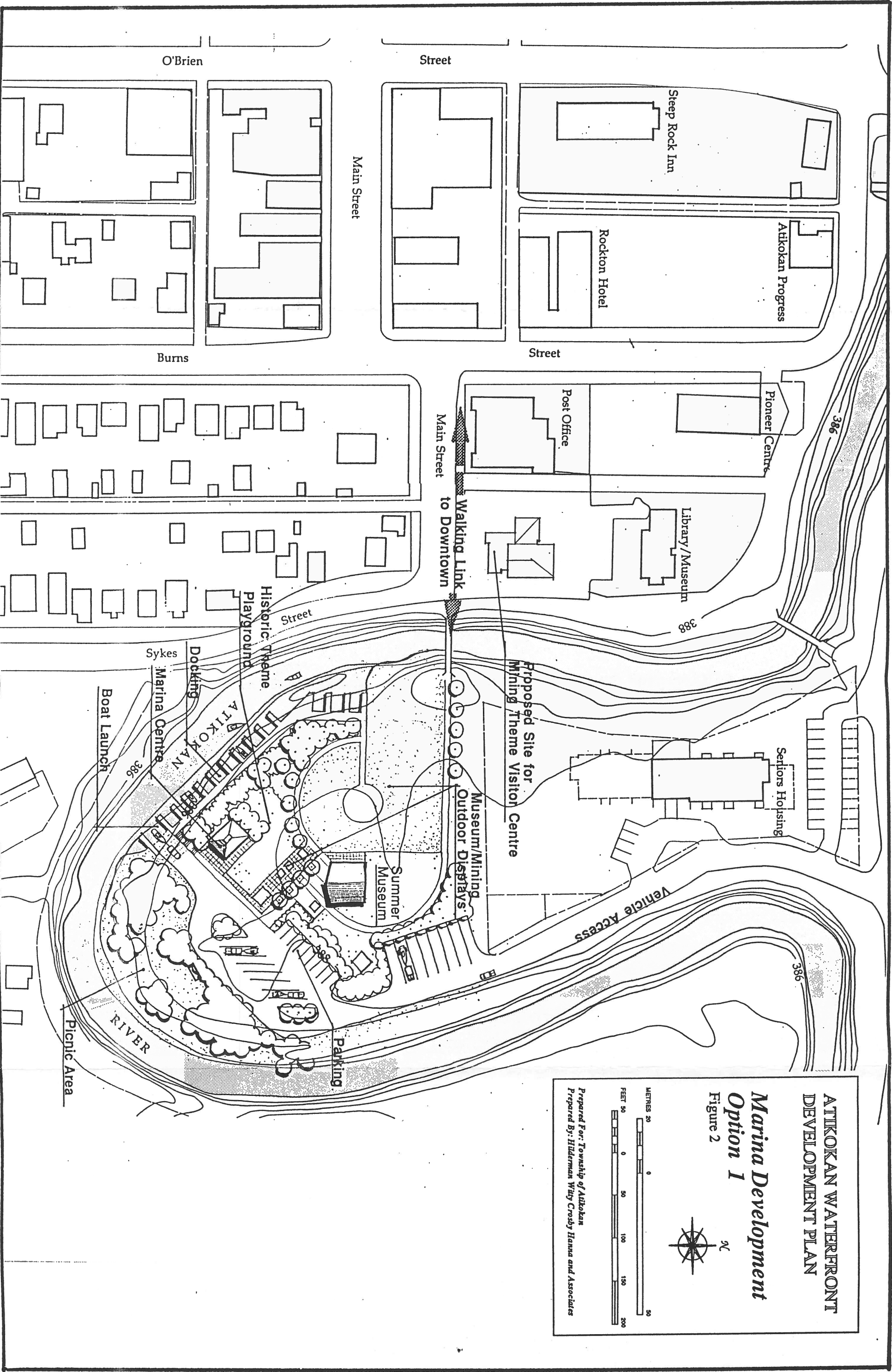
Advantages

- least amount (length) of channel improvement required
- Township property
- direct vehicle access from Mackenzie Avenue

Disadvantages

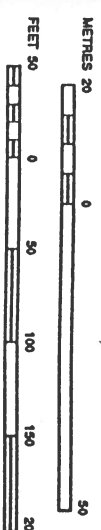
- indirect linkage to downtown - provide short-term docking near arena
- next to sewage treatment plant



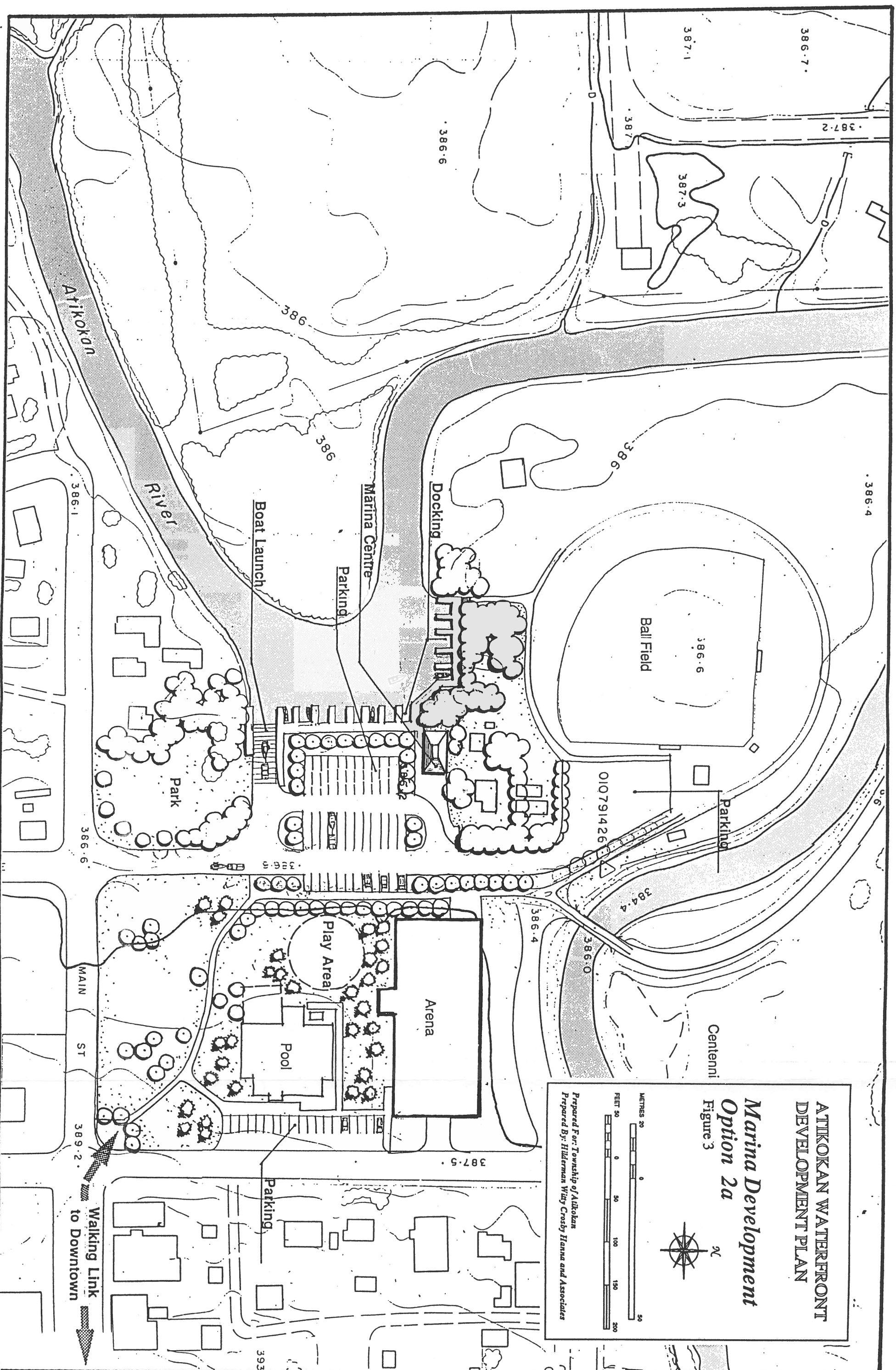


ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

*Marina Development  
Option 2a*  
Figure 3

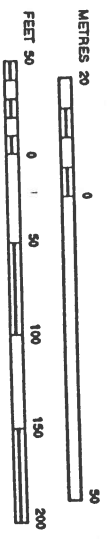


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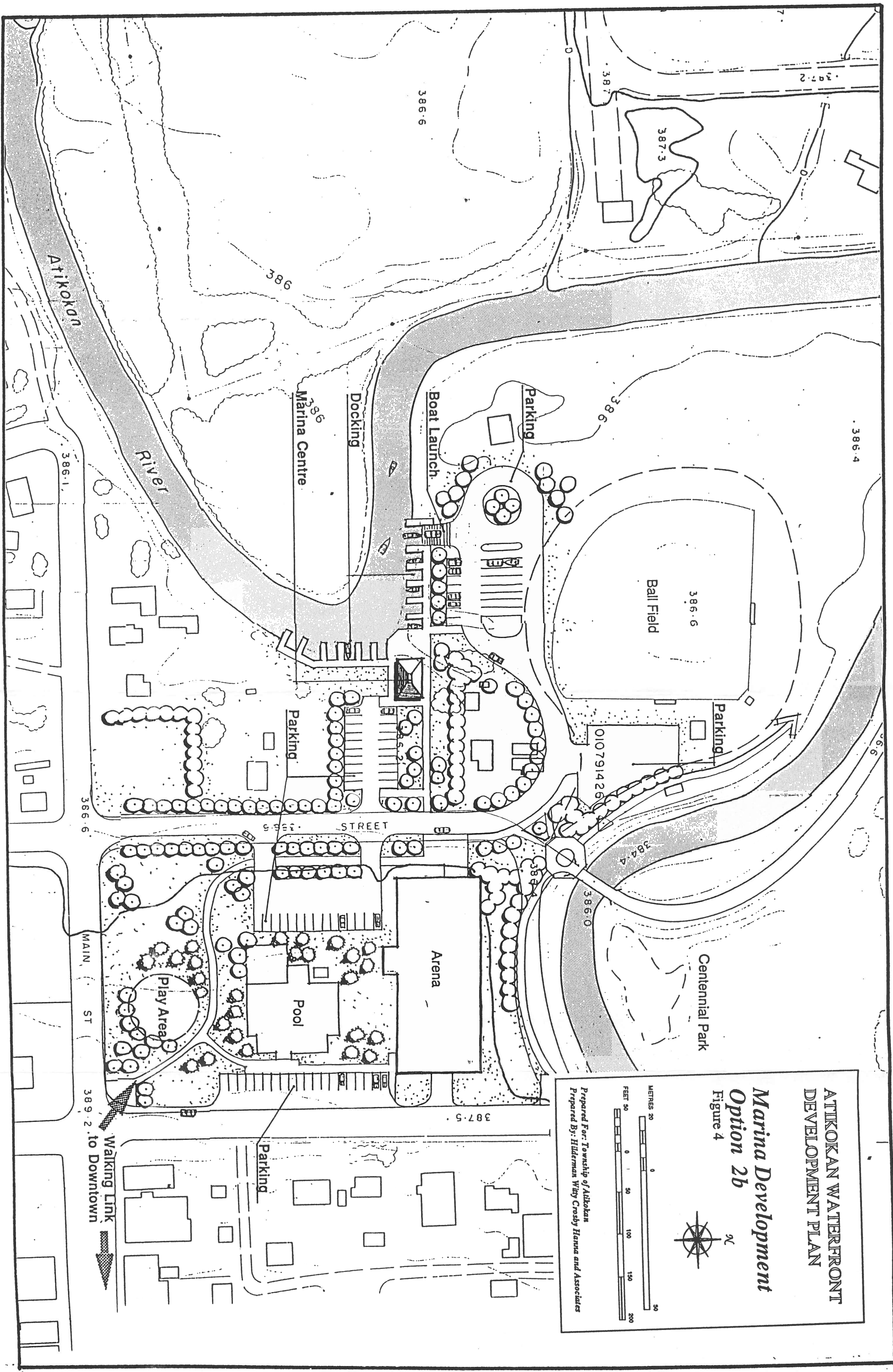


ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

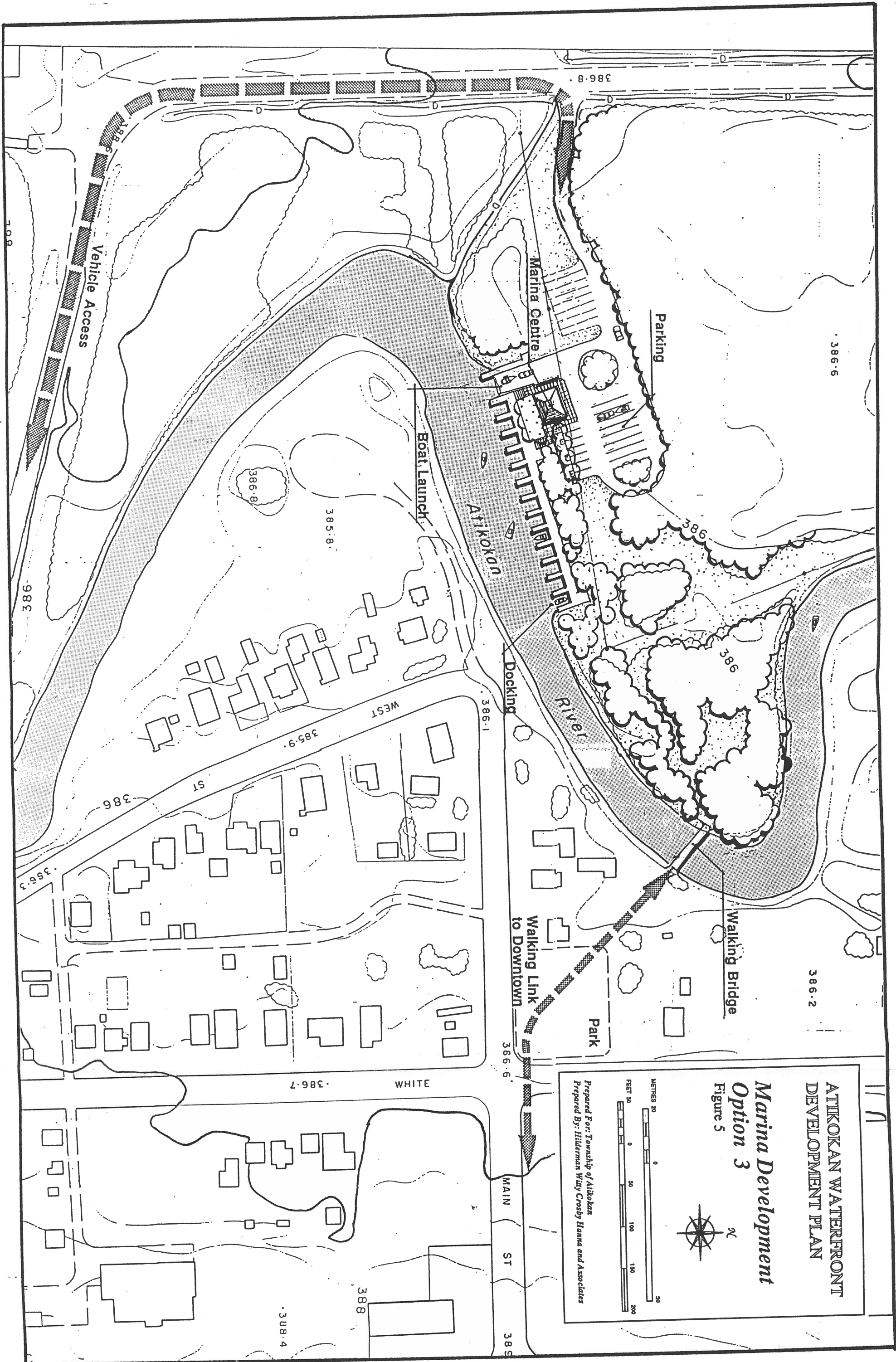
Marina Development  
Option 2b  
Figure 4



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Prepared By: Hilderman Why Crosby Hanna and Associates

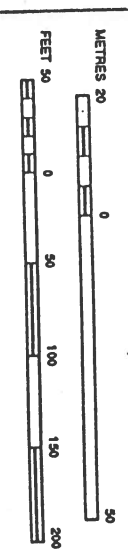






ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

*Marina Development  
Option 3*  
Figure 5



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Prepared By: Hilderman Wilby Crosby Hanna and Associates

## **6.2 Historical Park Redevelopment**

If Armstrong Point is not chosen as the site for the marina we recommend a number of improvements to the historical park. Proposed improvements include: reorganization and expansion of the outdoor displays, development of a dock and shoreline walk, reorganization of parking, a picnic area, a "teaching circle", a historical theme childrens play area, tree planting, new walkways and site furnishings.

## **6.3 Recreation Centre Redevelopment**

We recommend a major redevelopment/upgrading of the grounds surrounding the arena, pool and White Street ball park. This large block of publicly owned land is an important link between the downtown commercial area and the River. It has potential to be developed as a major green space and recreation area providing a counterbalance to the Historical Park/Mining Theme Attraction/Museum complex at the east end of the Downtown.

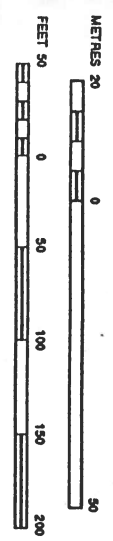
We propose that the parking be reorganized and consolidated and the surplus parking be re-developed as greenspace. Proposed development includes: a fenced outdoor patio on the southwest corner of the pool; a playground; walking path; pedestrian lighting; site furniture; turfgrass; tree and shrub planting.

If marina site option 2 is chosen the redevelopment of the Recreation Centre should be coordinated with construction of this facility. If site option 1 or 3 is selected than the Recreation Centre site redevelopment should be undertaken as a separate project.



ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

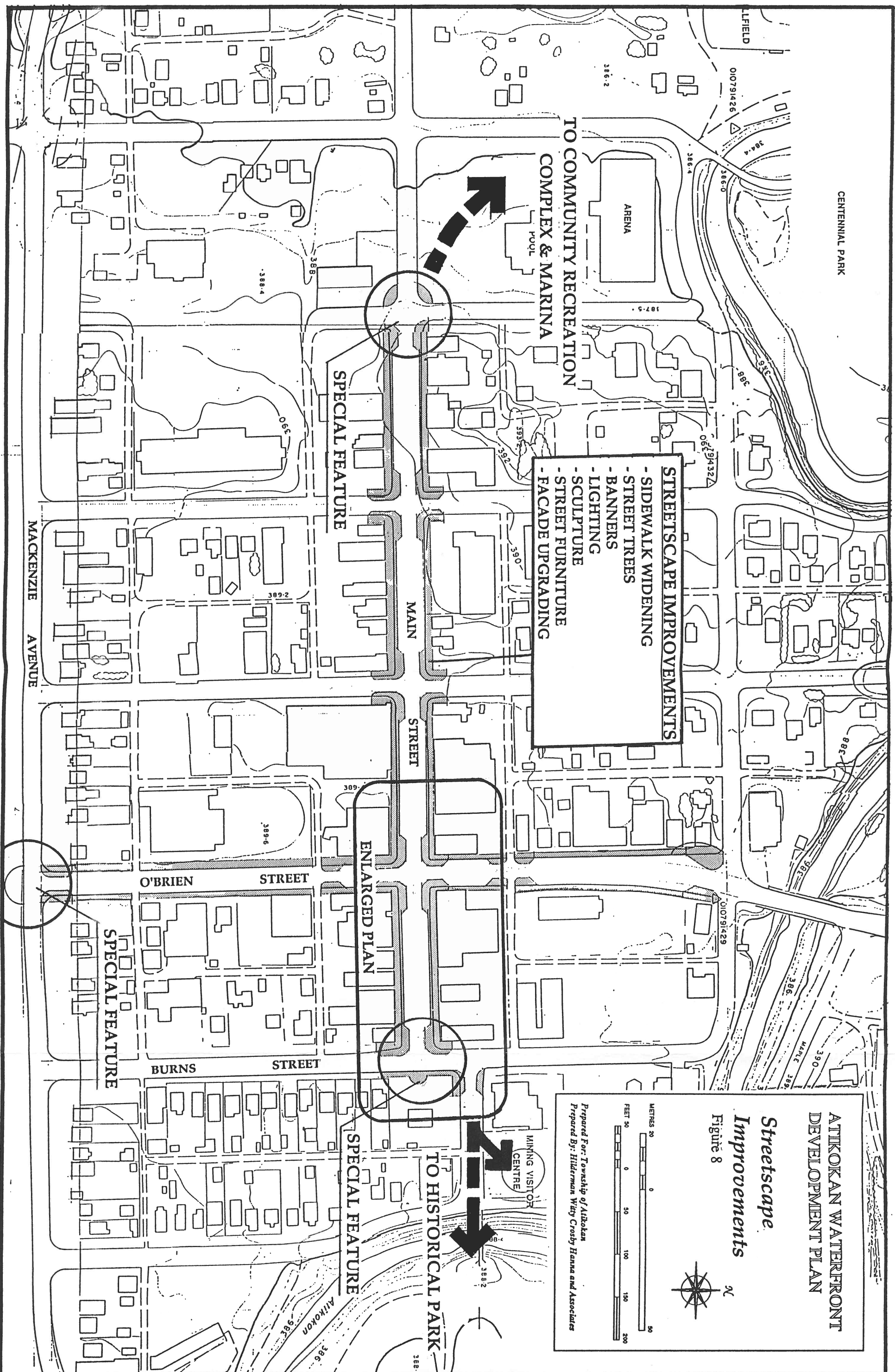
*Historical Park  
Redevelopment*  
Figure 6



Prepared For: Township of Atikokan  
Prepared By: Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna and Associates









O'BRIEN

BURNS

TO THE MINING THEME VISITOR CENT

LIGHTS / BANNERS

BANNERS  
UNIT PAVERS  
TREES

MINING THEME FEATURE  
SHRUB PLANTING

EXISTING SIDEWALK

ENLARGED CORNER  
5.0 (16.5'-0")

TREES, LIGHTS,  
BENCHES AND ARTIFACTS

9.0 (30'-0")

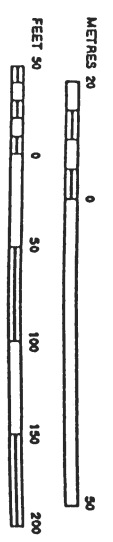
PARKING ISLE  
3.5 (11.5'-0")

TREES,  
BANNERS  
AND  
UNIT PAVERS

EXISTING SIDEWALK

ATKOKAN WATERFRONT  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

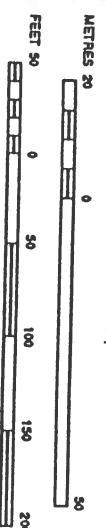
Streetscape  
Improvements  
Enlarged Plan  
Figure 9



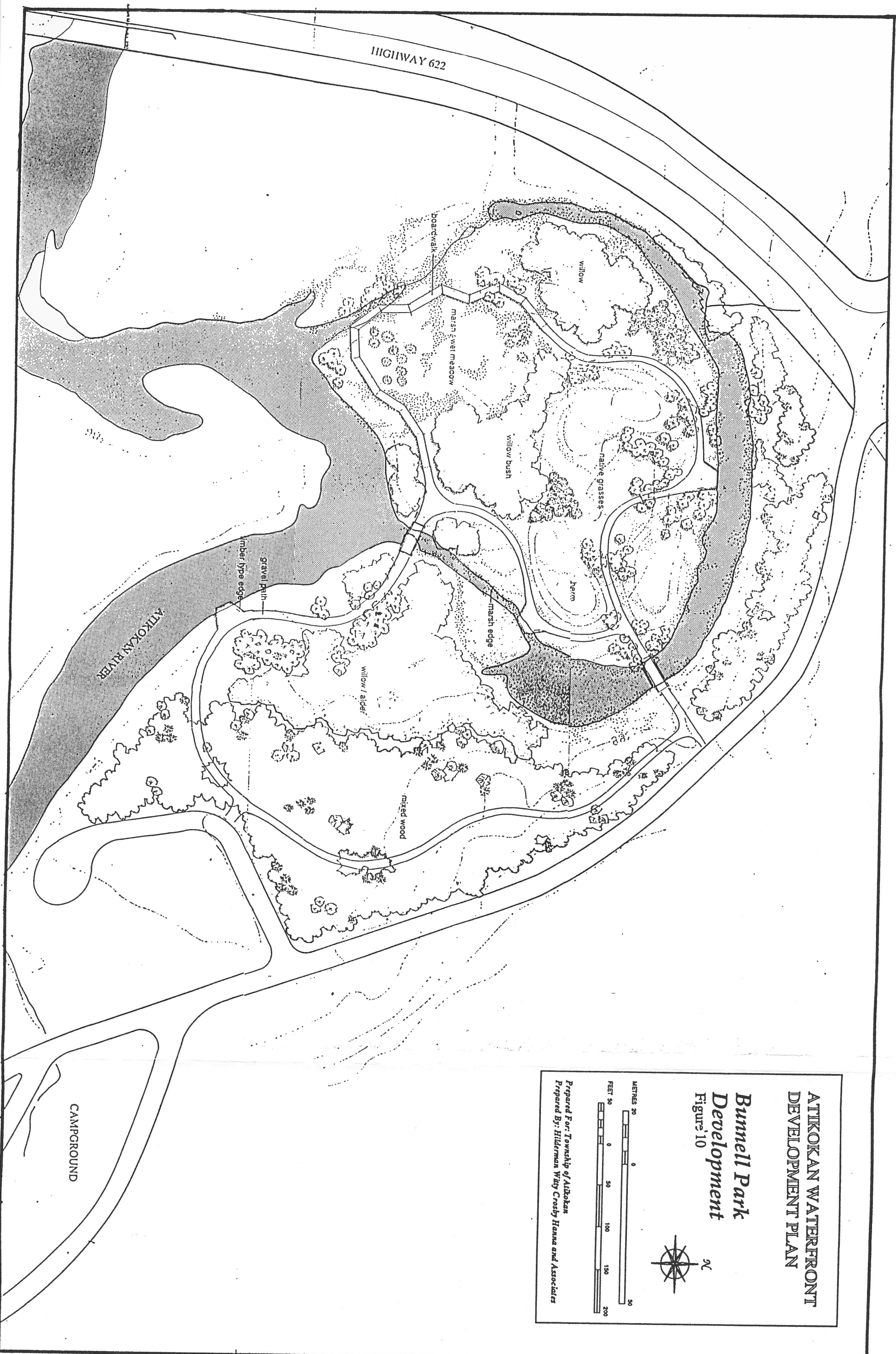
Prepared For: Township of Atikokan  
Prepared By: Hilderman Wily Crosby Hanna and Associates

ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**Bunnell Park**  
**Development**  
Figure 10



Prepared For: Township of Atikokan  
Prepared By: Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna and Associates



#### 6.4 Streetscape Improvements

We propose streetscape improvements be undertaken on Main Street and O'Brien Street. The proposed improvements will enhance the appearance of the central business area, provide a more attractive entry to the core area and provide an attractive walking link between the historical park and recreation complex.

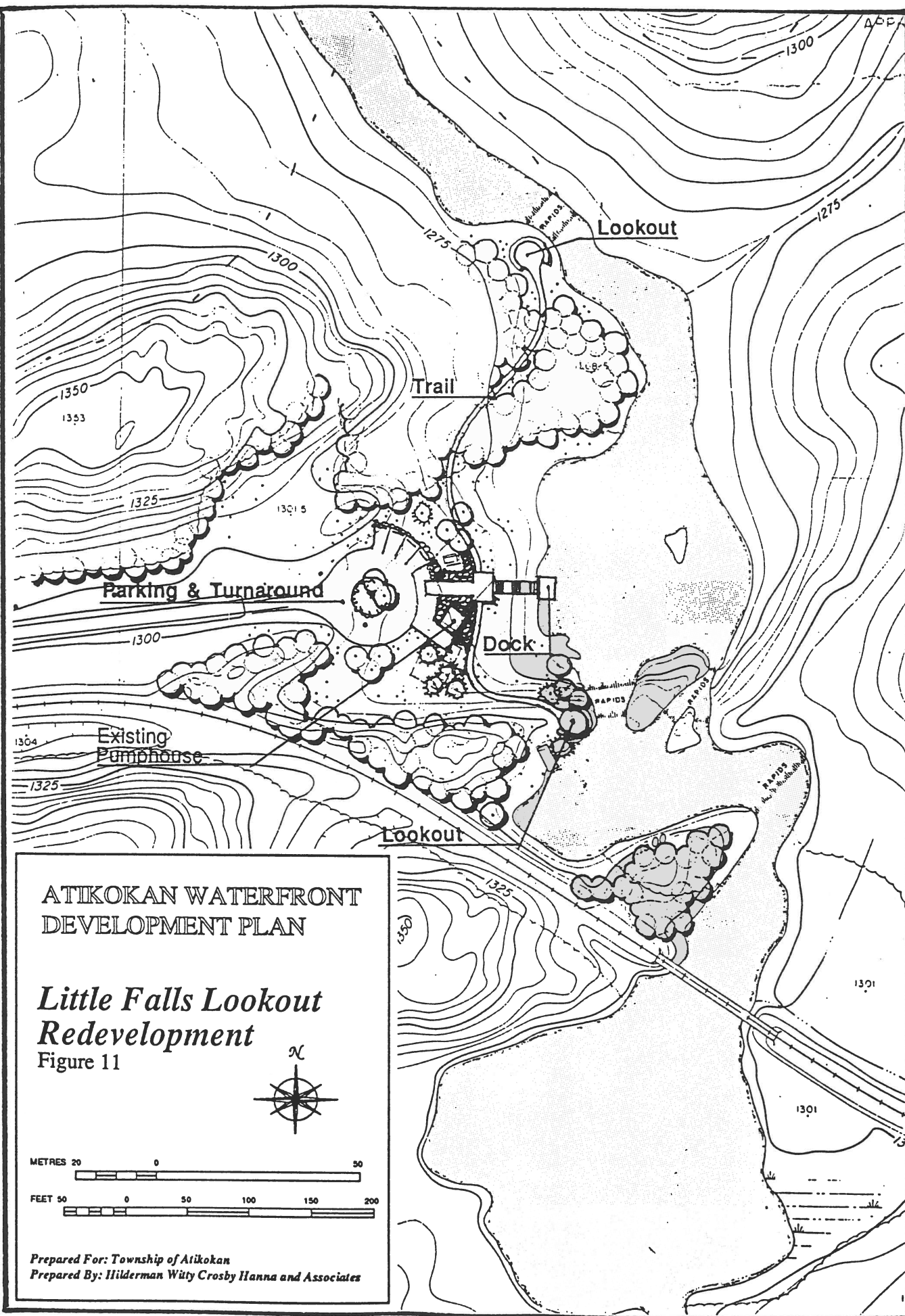
Potential improvements could include some or all of the following: sidewalk lighting, banners, sidewalk widening, tree planting, benches and other sidewalk furnishings. Streetscape improvements could be limited to some of these items and/or the improvements could be limited to several key locations eg. Main-O'Brien intersection, Mackenzie-O'Brien intersection.

#### 6.5 Bunnell Park Pond Development

We propose that the oxbow lake area at Bunnell park be restored to a "natural" condition and a nature trail be laid-out on the site. Development would include: trail clearing, trail surfacing, walking bridges/boardwalk, interpretive signs and trail signs.

#### 6.6 Little Falls Lookout

We propose that the lookout at Little Falls be improved to take better advantage of this attractive site. Proposed improvements include: removal of the old pumpnhouse, upgrading of the parking area, development of trails, a small dock, two lookout points, improved signage.



## **6.7 Trail Development**

We propose that a system of walking/snowmobiling/biking trails be developed along the river connecting residential, commercial and park areas. There are a number of places along the river where passage is blocked by steep slopes or incompatible land use. To by-pass these areas additional walking bridges will be required. In other locations sections of pathway may have to be linked via adjacent residential streets to by-pass the obstructions. Potential trail development includes: trail clearing, trail servicing, bridges, signage and lighting.

## **6.8 Channel Improvements**

Deepening and widening of the river is proposed in the Atikokan-Minaki Waterway Study to improve navigation, particularly during periods of reduced flow. Also changes to the White Street and O'Brien Street bridges are required to improve boat passage. These improvements would be required especially to allow larger boats to access a marina located on Armstrong Point. If site 2 or site 3 is selected for the marina, channel improvements will still be required downstream, however, the amount of dredging will be less. If no marina is developed then no channel improvements are necessary.

## **6.9 Riverbank Enhancement**

There are several areas where improvements can be made which will enhance the appearance of the waterfront. These include: replacement/renovation of existing bridges, a planting program in park and open space areas, modifying maintenance practices in open space and riverbank areas, design and installation of consistent signage and site furnishings. A number of unattractive industrial uses require screening and/or clean-up.

## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & APPROVALS

Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates spoke with representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Ministry of the Environment (MOE), Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and Transport Canada to determine requirements and procedures for environmental assessment and approvals for projects proposed in the waterfront plan. Each of these agencies is responsible for specific aspects of environmental assessment and project approval. MNR and MOE act as lead agencies and, in reviewing a project, involve other approving authorities such as DFO and Transport Canada (Coastguard).

**Fisheries:** DFO becomes involved when MNR reviews a project that may affect fish habitat such as docks, dams, dredging, shoreline, excavation (essentially any activity which is in or adjacent to water containing fish). MNR is required to advise DFO when reviewing projects which fall under the federal mandate. After reviewing the project DFO may require conditions to be attached to project approval such as: changes to the project, restrictions on construction activity, mitigation measures and/or compensation. DFO can require any project to be subject to a Federal Environment Assessment (EARP). In reviewing projects DFO applies the principle of "no net loss" of fish habitat which means any loss of fish habitat must be replaced through creation of substitute habitat or restoration of disturbed habitat. The proposed waterfront projects which are most likely to be affected by this approval process include: Bunnell Park pond redevelopment, walking bridges, marina, changes to shoreline vegetation.

Channel improvements proposed in the Atikokan-Minaki Waterway Study report including channel dredging and widening and weir construction to raise water levels are of equal or greater concern to MNR and DFO.

**Navigation:** Transport Canada (Coastguard) becomes involved in the approval of projects which may affect navigation on the Atikokan River. This would include changes to existing bridges, new walking bridges, and the channel improvements proposed in the Atikokan-Minaki Waterway Study mentioned above.

**Ministry of Natural Resources:** MNR reviews projects through the work permit process. Work permits are issued by the local MNR office at no charge and can take at least 2 weeks to process. Prior to issuing a work permit the MNR office reviews the project to determine if it is affected by the requirements of the following legislation:

- The Fisheries Act
- The Navigable Water Protection Act
- The Railway Act
- The Environmental Assessment Act
- The Environmental Protection Act
- The Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act
- The Forest Fires Protection Act
- The Ontario Water Resources Act
- The Public Lands Act

Local MNR officials have been involved in the discussion and review of the waterfront plan throughout the planning process and are aware of the projects which are being proposed. They have indicated that the potential impacts of proposed projects on fisheries habitat is the major concern.



MNR officials strongly recommend that the Township work closely with the local MNR office when planning implementation of specific projects in order to facilitate the review and approval process and reduce the potential for project delays. They propose that a working group involving local MNR staff and Township be organized to coordinate project review and approvals.

**Ministry of Environment:** MOE is responsible for implementation of the Environmental Assessment Act. Certain components of the waterfront development plan may fall under one of the following Class Environmental Assessments: Municipal Water & Sewer Projects, Municipal Roads, and/or Conservation Authorities Class EA for water management structures. Projects can be exempted if the total value is less than \$175,000.00, however, a large project cannot be broken down into a series of smaller projects to avoid EA Act compliance. Once the Township has adopted the waterfront plan the "project" will include all the development proposals in the document. The waterfront plan is therefore likely to be subject to an Individual Environmental Assessment.

Following completion and acceptance of the Waterfront Plan Final Report the Township should send the document to Planning and Approvals, Technical Assessment Section, Ministry of Environment in Thunder Bay requesting assistance in initiating the environmental review process.

A representative from MOE sits on the Waterfront Committee and has had the opportunity to review and comment on development proposals during the planning process. No comments on proposed development or environmental assessment requirements have been received. The Technical Assessment Section of MOE in Thunder Bay was sent a description of proposed projects by Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna &



Associates. The projects were also discussed at a meeting attended by representatives of this section, the chairperson of the Waterfront Committee and Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates. MOE has not yet defined specific requirements for review and approval of the waterfront development proposals.

## 8. PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

A public open house was held on Wednesday, March 20 and Thursday, March 21, 1991 at the Voyageur's Mall to show proposed/potential waterfront development and solicit comments from the public. Over 120 people took time to examine the plan drawings during the time that the representative from Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates was in attendance. The drawings were left on display for an additional week after the open house. Fifty-six comment sheets were completed by persons who viewed the display. A summary of these comments is provided in the Appendix to this report.

The open house revealed that there is strong support for development of the Atikokan waterfront. Many people expressed dissatisfaction with the present appearance of the riverbanks and the lack of facilities. Based on public reserve the most important projects are river clean-up, streetscape improvements, trail system, marina and recreation centre redevelopment. The preferred site for the marina was in the vicinity of the recreation centre.

A summary of public comments from the open house are included as an appendix to this report.

## 9. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The various development options/proposals were discussed with the Steering Committee, various interest groups and the general public to determine the level of support for each project and to establish community priorities. These discussions revealed that while there is broad support for almost all of the project proposals the projects can be grouped by priority as follows:

1. First Priority Projects
  - 1.1 Riverbank Cleanup/Enhancement
  - 1.2 Trail System
  - 1.3 Streetscape Improvements
2. Second Priority Projects
  - 2.1 Marina (only required with development of waterway)
  - 2.2 Recreation Centre Site Development
3. Third Priority Projects
  - 3.1 Bunnell Park Pond
  - 3.2 Historical Park Redevelopment
  - 3.3 Little Falls Lookout

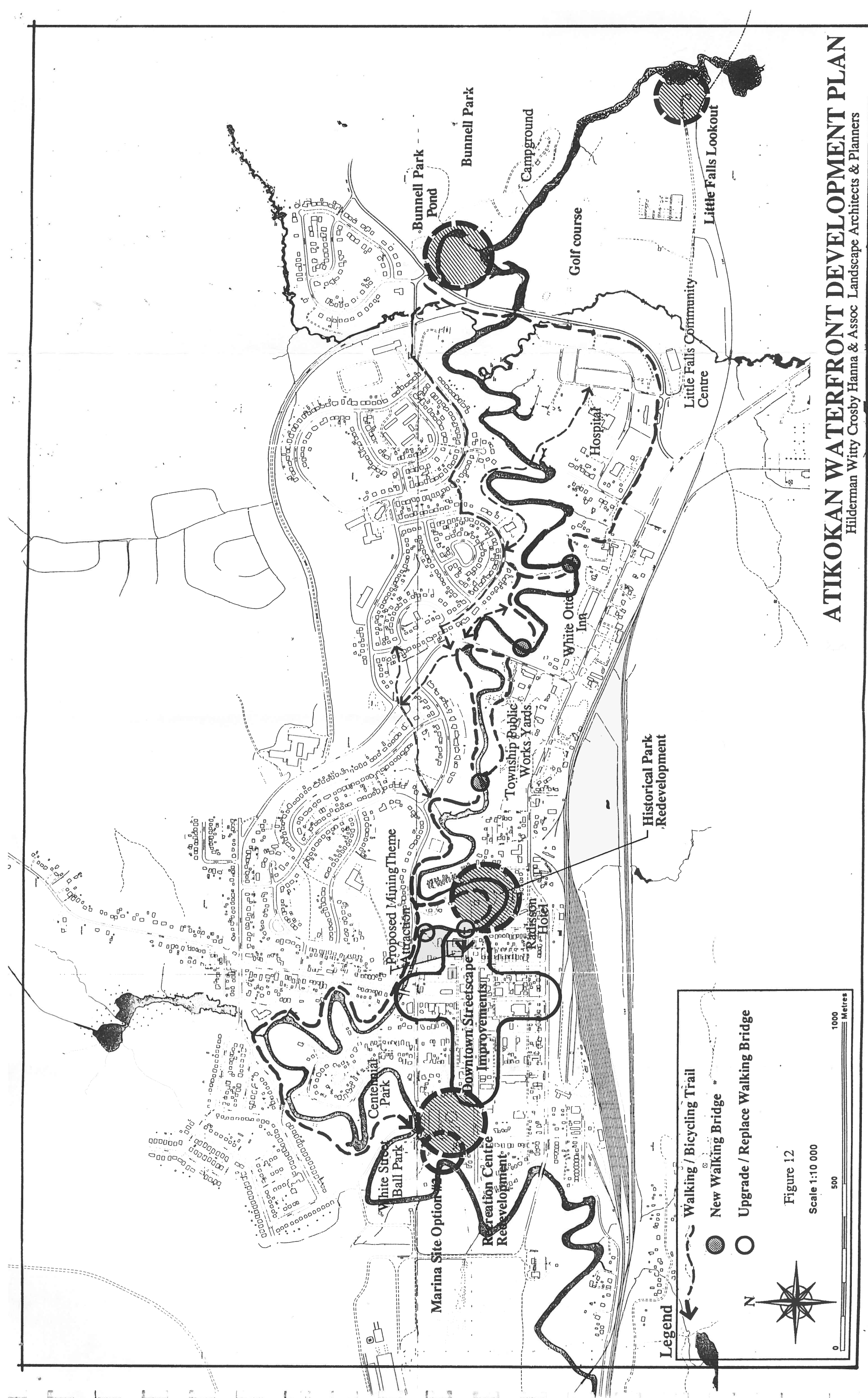
Although community priorities will be a major determinant in the phasing of development on the waterfront, project timing will also be influenced by the availability of funding, availability of a project sponsor/organizer (eg. service club, existing committee) and linkage to other projects (eg. marina and the Voyageur Heritage Waterway). Table I illustrates a proposed schedule for project phasing which takes these factors into consideration. Table II provides a summary of capital costs for proposed projects.

A summary description of each project is provided on the pages which follow:

# ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT: PROJECT PHASING

## DEVELOPMENT PHASING

PROJECT (BY PRIORITY)	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6-10
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and submit Environmental Impact Assessment</li> </ul>					
1.1 Riverbank Enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clean-up debris</li> <li>• selected tree removal, seeding</li> <li>• clean-up Township yard</li> <li>• prepare park development plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clean-up on private property</li> <li>• screen planting</li> <li>• tree planting</li> <li>• wildflower seed collecting</li> <li>• resolve encroachments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• screen planting</li> <li>• tree planting</li> <li>• wildflower seeding</li> <li>• wildflower seed collecting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tree planting</li> <li>• seeding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tree planting</li> <li>• seeding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tree planting</li> </ul>
1.2 River Trail & Greenway Linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prepare detailed plans for trail development &amp; upgrading</li> <li>• trail development Armstrong Point to Reid Street</li> <li>• walking bridge design</li> <li>• signage</li> <li>• greenlink upgrade</li> <li>• acquire r.o.w.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• greenlink upgrade</li> <li>• build 2 new bridges</li> <li>• bridge replacement (White Street)</li> <li>• bridge upgrade (Historical Park)</li> <li>• trail Reid Street to Bunnell Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• replace Reid Street bridge</li> <li>• trail Centennial Park</li> <li>• signage</li> <li>• lighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bridge upgrade / replace - Hancock</li> <li>• signage</li> <li>• lighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• bridge upgrade / replace - Library</li> <li>• lighting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lighting</li> </ul>
1.3 Streetscape Improvements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organize business association (BIA)</li> <li>• apply for funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• prepare detailed plans</li> <li>• coordinate with construction of Mining Attraction VRC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• construction / implementation: sidewalk widening, furnishings, sculpture, store-fronts</li> </ul>			
2.1 Marina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• waterway engineering feasibility study</li> <li>• acquire land for marina site</li> <li>• applications for approvals</li> <li>• environmental impact assessment</li> <li>• apply for funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• site &amp; facility design</li> <li>• construction</li> </ul>				
2.2 Recreation Centre Redevelopment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apply for funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• detailed site design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• construction</li> </ul>		
3.1 Bunnell Park Pond	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• approvals</li> <li>• detailed site design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• site redevelopment &amp; rehabilitation</li> </ul>				
3.2 Historical Park Redevelopment	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• coordinate with design of mining attraction</li> <li>• apply for funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• site &amp; exhibit design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• construction</li> </ul>		
3.3 Little Falls	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demolish old pumphouse</li> <li>• grade &amp; seed</li> </ul>	--	--	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• detailed site design</li> <li>• construction</li> </ul>



# ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT PLAN PRELIMINARY BUDGET ANALYSIS

Item	Estimated Capital	Contingency (15%)	GST on Capital (3% net)	Professional & Admin. Fees (15%)	GST on Fees (3% net)	TOTAL
1.1 RIVERBANK ENHANCEMENT	150,000.00	22,500.00	5,175.00	25,875.00	776.25	\$204,400.00
1.2 RIVERTRAIL & GREENWAY LINKAGES	142,000.00*	21,300.00	4,899.00	24,495.00	734.85	\$193,400.00
1.2.1. WALKING BRIDGES						
- upgrade (4)	80,000.00	12,000.00	4,600.00	13,800.00	414.00	\$110,800.00
- new bridges (2)	60,000.00	9,000.00	3,450.00	10,350.00	310.50	\$83,100.00
- replacements (1)	30,000.00	4,500.00	1,035.00	5,175.00	155.25	\$40,900.00
1.3 STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS	750,000.00	112,500.00	25,875.00	129,375.00	3,881.25	\$1,021,600.00
2.1 MARINA	312,000.00	46,800.00	17,940.00	53,820.00	1,614.60	\$432,200.00
2.1.1. CHANNEL IMPROVEMENTS						
- Below Front Street	18,000.00	2,700.00	621.00	3,105.00	93.15	\$24,500.00
- From St. to Historical Park	130,000.00	19,500.00	4,485.00	22,425.00	672.75	\$177,100.00
2.2 RECREATION CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT	340,000.00	51,000.00	11,730.00	58,650.00	1,759.50	\$463,100.00
3.1 BUNNELL PARK POND	78,000.00	11,700.00	2,691.00	13,455.00	403.65	\$106,200.00
3.2 HISTORICAL PARK REDEVELOPMENT	125,000.00	18,750.00	4,312.50	21,562.50	646.88	\$170,300.00
3.3 LITTLE FALLS LOOKOUT	40,000.00	6,000.00	1,380.00	6,900.00	207.00	\$54,500.00
TOTAL PROJECTS	1,948,000.00	292,200.00	67,206.00	336,030.00	10,080.90	\$3,078,100.00

NOTE: 1991 Dollars

\* Costs for outdoor lighting not included

## PROJECT: RIVERBANK ENHANCEMENT

### Description:

- Clean up of garbage, debris on public land;
- Removal of private encroachment (dumping) on public land;
- Clean up of private lands adjacent to river corridor;
- Stop riverbank vegetation burning program;
- Designate mowed grass areas, naturalize other areas of floodplain with wildflower seeding and reforestation;
- Tree planting - visually screen unattractive features, views.

### Method:

- Utilize Environmental Youth Corps and similar programs to clean up public lands - on-going;
- Prepare site development plan for rehabilitation of lands adjacent to Public Works yards;
- Once public land clean up is visibly underway initiate clean up of private lands. Use persuasion and promotion initially to gain public cooperation. If persons responsible for private encroachments on public lands (eg. derelict vehicles, debris) are not cooperative consider by-law enforcement measures;
- Hire landscape architect to prepare a landscape/vegetation management plan for the waterfront/flood plain which provides plans, details, specifications for vegetation enhancement and maintenance;
- Undertake seeding and long term tree planting program to implement waterfront landscape plan.

### Potential Project Sponsors/Organizers:

- Township of Atikokan Parks Department;
- Township of Atikokan Public Works Department;
- Atikokan Beautification Committee;
- Environment Atikokan;
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

### Timing:

- Riverbank enhancement/clean up is the project which received the greatest public support. Implementation of the program should begin immediately and continue on an on-going basis. The Township should allocate a separate annual budget for maintenance and enhancement of the riverbank and adjacent lands.

### Related Projects:

- Trail Network;
- Marina/Recreation Centre Development;
- Historical Park Redevelopment;
- Bunnell Park Pond.

## PROJECT: RIVERBANK ENHANCEMENT cont'd

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Approvals/<br>Environment Issues:              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grass seeding, tree clearing and tree planting are subject to environmental assessment under the Ontario Environmental Assessment process;</li><li>• Work permits from OMNR may be required for portions of this work;</li><li>• Township of Atikokan development on public land.</li></ul> |
| Potential Economic<br>Benefits:                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhanced town image - improves appearance for visitors; secondary attraction.</li></ul>   |
| Private Sector<br>Investment<br>Opportunities: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of waterfront/river oriented functions taking advantage of improved news eg. food and beverage, accommodation.</li></ul>  |
| Official Plan, Zoning<br>By-law changes:       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None required.</li></ul>  |
| Capital Budget:                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$204,400.00</li></ul>  |
| Operation &<br>Maintenance<br>Requirements:    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Grass cover mowing, tree maintenance, tree replacement.</li></ul>   |
| Potential Funding<br>Sources:                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OMNR - tree seedling stock;</li><li>• MNDR - waterfront program funding;</li><li>• Beautification Committee;</li><li>• Parks Department;</li><li>• CEIC Section 25;</li><li>• Environmental Youth Corps.</li></ul>  |



## PROJECT: RIVER TRAIL AND GREENWAY LINKAGES

- Description:**
- Development of a network of trails for walking, bicycling, snowmobiling along the river;
  - Enhancement of existing trail links through adjacent residential areas: link to new trail system;
  - Upgrading/replacement of existing walking bridge; construction of new walking bridges;
  - Development of system of maps, signing, furnishings to give the trail system a cohesive, high profile image.
- Method:**
- Prepare detailed layout plans for trail location and phasing;
  - Locate bridge sites, prepare bridge design, construct;
  - Develop trail logo/image, prepare designs for trail markers, furnishings;
  - Cut new trail right-of-way;
  - Construct new granular path surfacing;
  - Upgrade existing granular pathways.
- Potential Project Sponsors/Organizers:**
- Township of Atikokan - Parks Department;
  - Atikokan Economic Development Corporation.
  - Organize Atikokan Trail Association to assist with trail development and maintenance;
  - Initiate "adopt a trail" program involving residents and businesses in trail financing;
  - SnoHo Snowmobile Club;
  - Environment Atikokan.
- Timing:**
- Initiate first phase of project immediately. Phase in trail system development and enhancement over 5 years. Organize long term (10 year) program to install lighting.
- Related Projects:**
- Riverbank Enhancement;
  - Historical Park Redevelopment;
  - Marina/Recreation Centre Development;
  - Bunnell Park;
  - Streetscape Improvements.
- Approvals/Environmental Issues:**
- Tree clearing and vegetation removal require environmental review;
  - Pedestrian bridges require review and approval by OMNR, Coastguard, M.O.E.;
  - Potential for concern about loss of privacy from neighbouring residents - possible need to resolve conflict;
  - Township of Atikokan - development on public land.

**PROJECT: RIVER TRAIL AND GREENWAY LINKAGES cont'd**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| Potential Economic Benefits:             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhanced town image - improves attraction for visitors - winter and summer.</li></ul>   |
| Private Sector Investment Opportunities: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bicycle rental.</li></ul>   |
| Official Plan, Zoning By-law Changes:    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None required.</li></ul>  |
| Capital Budget:                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$193,400.00 *excluding costs for lighting.</li></ul>   |
| Operation & Maintenance Requirements:    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintenance of path surfaces, signage, benches, clearing of fallen trees, bridge maintenance, operation and maintenance of outdoor lighting.</li></ul>  |
| Potential Funding Sources:               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MNM Waterfront Program;</li><li>• Ministry of Tourism &amp; Recreation;</li><li>• Ministry of Municipal Affairs - PRIDE;</li><li>• Local residents, businesses "Adopt a Trail";</li><li>• Service clubs;</li><li>• CEIC Section 25.</li></ul> |

## PROJECT: STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reconstruction of sidewalks, widening at intersections, installation of unit pavers;</li><li>• Tree, shrub planting;</li><li>• Ornamental lighting;</li><li>• Street furniture;</li><li>• Banners;</li><li>• Storefront improvements.</li></ul>
Method:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Organize Business Improvement Association or equivalent organization involving downtown business people;</li><li>• Retain Landscape Architect/urban design consultant to prepare detailed plans;</li></ul>
Potential Project Sponsors/Organizers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Downtown businesses;</li><li>• Chamber of Commerce;</li><li>• Atikokan Economic Development Corporation;</li><li>• Atikokan Beautification Committee.</li></ul>
Timing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initiate organization of businesses immediately;</li><li>• Prepare detailed plans, construction schedule;</li><li>• Initiate first phase construction within 2 years.</li></ul>
Related Projects:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mining Theme Attraction;</li><li>• Marina/Recreation Centre Development;</li><li>• Historical Park Redevelopment;</li><li>• Riverbank Trail.</li></ul>
Approvals/ Environmental Issues:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Township of Atikokan.</li></ul>
Potential Economic Benefits:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enhanced downtown image - improves attraction for visitors and residents - potential increased business.</li></ul>
Private Sector Investment & Opportunities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Business Improvement Association;</li><li>• Storefront Improvements;</li><li>• Outdoor facility development (eg. outdoor dining).</li></ul>
Official Plan/Zoning By-law Changes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None required.</li></ul>

**PROJECT: STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS cont'd**

**Capital Budget:**

- \$1,021,600.00.

**Operation and  
Maintenance**

**Requirements:**

- Pruning, watering, fertilizing trees and shrubs, paving, street furniture, banner replacement (3-5 year life);
- Operation and maintenance of outdoor lighting.

**Potential Funding  
Sources:**

- Ministry of Municipal Affairs - PRIDE;
- Business Improvement Association;
- Northern Ontario Heritage Fund;
- Ministry of Culture & Communications;
- Ministry of Northern Development & Mines.

## PROJECT: MARINA & RECREATION CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

- Description:**
- Develop a marina facility at site option 2 near the arena to service boat traffic using the Atikokan-Minaki Waterway. Marina to include boat launch, floating and crib docking, marina centre (fuel sales, boat service, other retail). Option 2a is preferred but is dependent on successful acquisition of private lands.;
  - Redevelopment of arena/pool/ball park area in conjunction with marina development: organize and define parking areas, walkways, landscape development, outdoor pool patio area, playground, park space, outdoor lighting.
- Method:**
- Determine timing/need for marina as determined by development of Atikokan-Minaki Waterway;
  - Negotiate purchase of private lands required for preferred boat launch and parking site.
- Potential Project Sponsors/Organizers:**
- Atikokan-Minaki Waterway Committee;
  - Township of Atikokan - Parks & Recreation Department;
  - Atikokan Economic Development Corporation.
- Timing:**
- Redevelopment of the recreation centre should occur in conjunction with development of the marina. Marina development should be coordinated with development of the Voyageurs Heritage Waterway;
  - Investigate immediately availability of private lands required for boat launch and parking areas immediately;
  - Undertake site design once future of marina development is known.
- Related Projects:**
- Atikokan-Minaki Waterway;
  - Streetscape Improvements.
- Approvals/Environmental Issues:**
- Development of the marina will likely require some dredging and widening of the channel in the vicinity of the docks. Construction of the boat launch will require excavation of the bank and some disturbance of the riverbed. Crib docking will result in some modification of the riverbank. These activities will require review and approval by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ministry of the Environment.

## PROJECT: MARINA & RECREATION CENTRE DEVELOPMENT cont'd

Potential Economic Benefit:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Atikokan-Minaki Waterway has potential to strengthen existing businesses in Atikokan. The marina must be located and designed to be convenient and attractive to waterway users;</li><li>• Tourist traffic from waterway will increase business for tourist oriented businesses including: food and beverage and accommodation.</li></ul>
Private Sector launching Investment Opportunities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Marina - boat rentals, fuel sales and service, docking and fees, misc. sales;</li><li>• outfitting, boat rentals;</li><li>• Spin-off opportunities - accommodation, food and beverage, retail sales.</li></ul>
Official Plan/Zoning By-law Changes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Zoning amendment required to permit construction of marina building and other structures within Hazard Land Zone.</li></ul>
Capital Budget:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$432,200.00 for marina facility;</li><li>• \$463,100.00 for recreation centre redevelopment;</li><li>• \$177,100.00 for channel improvements from Front Street to the Historical Park;</li><li>• \$24,500.00 for channel improvements below Front Street.</li></ul>
Operation & Maintenance Requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintenance of docks, parking, boat launch, greenspace areas, benches, signage;</li><li>• Operation of marina centre;</li><li>• Operation and maintenance of outdoor lighting.</li><li>• River channel will require on-going maintenance to ensure navigability for larger boats.</li></ul>
Potential Funding Sources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MNDM Waterfront Program;</li><li>• Ministry of Tourism &amp; Recreation - private investment;</li><li>• Northern Ontario Heritage Fund;</li><li>• Private Investors;</li></ul>

## PROJECT: BUNNELL PARK POND

- Description:**
- Restoration of pond area and development of wildlife viewing and wetland interpretation opportunities;
  - Finish grading of excavated material to create gentler slopes/berms;
  - Remove existing access across pond and replace with walking bridge;
  - Planting of native trees, shrubs, grasses to create a native arboretum;
  - Develop pathways, boardwalk, interpretation stations and viewpoints;
  - Habitat restoration - nesting boxes, towers.
- Method:**
- Retain landscape architect to prepare site development plan and details;
  - Review plans with OMNR, obtain approval and support;
  - Apply for funding;
  - Complete the grading of existing excavated material;
  - Construct pathways, boardwalks, view points, signage;
  - Undertake tree and shrub planting, groundcover seeding;
  - Remove existing access - replace with walking bridge.
- Potential Project Sponsors/Organizers:**
- Bunnell Park Committee;
  - Sportsmen's Club;
  - Ducks Unlimited;
  - OMNR - CWIPS program;
  - Service Clubs;
  - Environment Atikokan.
- Timing:**
- Although a third priority initiative, the work which has already begun on this project should continue (partial funding is in place), additional funds appear to be available and there is an active project sponsor.
  - Complete the grading of the excavated material as soon as possible and seed exposed soil to reduce erosion;
  - Meet with potential project sponsors and funding agencies immediately to develop a schedule for implementation;
  - Complete first phase of construction project in 1991/1992. Complete the project once additional funding and sponsorships are in place.

**PROJECT: BUNNELL PARK POND cont'd**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Related Projects                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trail development.</li></ul>   |
| Approvals/<br>Environmental Issues:            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plans require approval from MNR;</li><li>• Construction activity requires a work permit.</li></ul>   |
| Potential Economic<br>Benefits:                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of nature trail and interpretive features will be an additional attraction for visitors to Atikokan, however, direct economic benefits will be limited to employment during construction of trails, boardwalks and other facilities.</li></ul> |
| Private Sector<br>Investment<br>Opportunities: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nil.</li></ul>   |
| Official Plan/Zoning<br>By-law Changes:        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conservation area is not listed as a permitted use under the zoning by-law, however, public and private parks are listed as permitted.</li></ul>   |
| Capital Budget:                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$106,200.00.</li></ul>  |
| Operations &<br>Maintenance<br>Requirements:   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintenance of paths, boardwalks, interpretive fixtures, nesting boxes, grass cover, tree plantings.</li></ul>   |
| Potential Funding<br>Sources:                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MNR: Community Wildlife Improvement Program (CWIP); funding for design, facility construction for habitat development, interpretation;</li><li>• Environmental Youth Corps.;</li><li>• Ducks Unlimited.</li></ul>  |



## PROJECT: HISTORICAL PARK REDEVELOPMENT

- Description:**
- Reorganization and enhancement of Historical Park - rearrange location/sequence of outdoor displays - group by theme (ie. forestry, railroad, mining) - create new mining theme area to link to proposed Mining Theme Attraction;
  - New pathways, new "platforms" for displays, new interpretive displays, outdoor amphitheatre/teaching circle;
  - Dock, shoreline walk;
  - Upgrade walking bridge;
  - Improve parking area;
  - Tree planting to screen conflicting use and define display areas;
  - Historic theme playground.
- Method:**
- This project is closely linked to plans for the Atikokan Mining Theme Attraction and the museum. Site plans should be prepared by a qualified landscape architecture/planning consultant in close consultation with representatives from the museum and Mining Attraction once the future of the Mining Attraction is known.
- Potential Project Sponsors/Organizers:**
- Atikokan Mining Theme Attraction Committee;
  - Atikokan Museum Board;
  - Canadian Legion.
- Timing:**
- Timing of this project is linked to planning for the Mining Theme Attraction;
  - Design and funding applications should be prepared beginning in year two or three (or before if necessary).
- Related Projects:**
- Atikokan Mining Theme Attraction;
  - Atikokan Museum;
  - Streetscape Improvements.
- Approvals/Environmental Issues:**
- Bridge, dock - OMNR;
  - Landscape development - MOE.
- Potential Economic Benefits:**
- Developed in conjunction with the Mining Theme Attraction this site could become a significant tourist attraction creating increased visitation to Atikokan (plus increased demand for retail, food and beverage and accommodation services).

## **PROJECT: HISTORICAL PARK REDEVELOPMENT    cont'd**

### **Private Sector Opportunities:**

- Increased visitation to Mining Theme Attraction may allow for expansion of existing tourist-oriented businesses or creation of new businesses.

### **Official Plan/Zoning By-law Changes:**

- None required.

### **Capital Budget:**

- \$170,300.00.

### **Operations & Maintenance Requirements:**

- Maintenance of exhibits, interpretive features, maintenance of grass cover, trees and shrub plantings, operation and maintenance of lighting.

### **Potential Funding Sources:**

- Ministry of Culture & Communications;
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs - PRIDE;
- Ministry of Northern Development & Mines;
- Corporate sponsors and private donors;
- Service clubs;
- Historical Society.

## PROJECT: LITTLE FALLS LOOKOUT

Description:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Site redevelopment and enhancement at existing Little Falls Lookout;</li><li>• New car turnaround and parking area;</li><li>• Demolition of old pumphouse building;</li><li>• New walkways leading to lookouts located above and below the falls;</li><li>• Walkway, stairs leading to dock at base of falls;</li><li>• Tree and shrub planting.</li></ul>
Method:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Retain landscape architect to prepare site development plan and details;</li><li>• Demolish pumphouse building;</li><li>• Upgrade parking area.</li><li>• Construct walkways and lookouts, stairway and dock;</li><li>• Tree planting, shrub beds.</li></ul>
Potential Project Sponsors/Organizers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Township of Atikokan Parks Department;</li><li>• Beautification Committee;</li><li>• Service Clubs.</li></ul>
Timing:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This is a lower priority project based on open house and steering committee review; location is not high profile.</li><li>• Schedule building demolition and parking area when equipment, labour and financing available.</li></ul>
Related Projects:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bunnell Park walking trails.</li></ul>
Approvals/ Environmental Issues:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OMNR approval required for any shoreline construction;</li><li>• Environmental assessment required as part of entire waterfront development.</li></ul>
Potential Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Minor.</li></ul>
Private Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nil.</li></ul>
Official Plan/Zoning By-law Changes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• None required.</li></ul>

**PROJECT: LITTLE FALLS LOOKOUT cont'd**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Capital Budget:</b>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• \$54,500.00.</li></ul>  |
| <b>Operations &amp; Maintenance Requirements:</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Maintenance of stairs, pathways, furnishings, grass cover, tree and shrub plantings;</li><li>• operation and maintenance of outdoor lighting.</li></ul>                             |
| <b>Potential Funding Sources:</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• MNDM: Waterfront Program;</li><li>• Ministry of Municipal Affairs - PRIDE;</li><li>• Canada Employment &amp; Immigration Section 25;</li><li>• Environmental Youth Corps.</li></ul> |

## **9.1 Potential Funding Sources**

The following is a description of potential funding sources for proposed projects.

### **1. Marina**

#### **a) Public investment**

- Community Waterfront Program
  - eligible projects: capital costs totalling at least \$250,000
  - eligible waterfront facilities: up to a maximum of \$500,000 (not to exceed 1/3 of total project cost and to be matched in at least like amount by applicant)
- Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
  - discretionary funding: up to \$250,000 - 300,000 per year for waterfront projects

#### **b) Private investment**

- Ministry of Tourism and Recreation
  - Destinations North Program - capital construction assistance program: incentive loans, interest and principal payment free for up to 5 years
  - new tourist marinas: up to \$500,000

### **2. Channel Improvements**

Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

- discretionary funding: up to \$250,000 - 300,000 for waterfront projects

3. Bridge Improvements

PRIDE - Ministry of Municipal Affairs

- administration costs: capital costs related to building, improving, replacing services intended specifically to serve project area - grant covering 50% of improvement costs; municipalities other 50%

4. Historical Park

Ministry of Culture and Communications - Heritage Facilities

Improvements - grants to upgrade facilities/buildings: up to 1/3 of the total project costs or \$1 million whichever is less

PRIDE - Ministry of Municipal Affairs

- capital costs related to building, improving social and recreational facilities: grant covering 50% of improvement costs; municipalities remaining 50%

5. Bunnell Park

Ministry of Tourism and Recreation - Recreation Capital Conservation

- Program: grant up to 1/2 of the net eligible costs of the project after all other grants have been deducted: maximum up to \$150,000

Ministry of Natural Resources - Community Wildlife Improvement Program

- grants toward habitat enhancement, interpretive facilities.

6. Little Falls Lookout

Ministry of Tourism and Recreation - Recreation Capital Conservation

- Program: grant up to 1/2 of the net eligible costs of the project: maximum up to \$150,000

7. Streetscape Improvements

PRIDE - Ministry of Municipal Affairs

- aesthetic improvements (streetscape upgrading, landscaping and buffers: grants covering 50% of improvement costs

BIA - Ministry of Municipal Affairs

- improvement of physical environment and economic redevelopment of local businesses: paid by special levy to the business tax based on individual realty assessment

Heritage Canada - requires Project co-ordinator appointed by municipality: commitment of \$50,000 per year for three years

8. Walking/bicycling trails

Ministry of Tourism and Recreation - Recreation Capital Conservation

Program: grant up to 1/2 net eligible project costs to a maximum of \$150,000

PRIDE - Ministry of Municipal Affairs

- administration costs to improve services intended to serve project area: grant up to 50% of improvement and acquisition costs;

Labour costs - NORTOP: wage subsidy for secondary/post secondary students up to a maximum subsidy of \$3.50 and \$5.00 for 6-10 and 6-16 weeks respectively

- SEED: Challenge 91 (Federal Program) - wage subsidy up to \$4.25 per hour for secondary and post-secondary students
- CEIC Section 25: enhanced UI benefits in lieu of wages for unemployed workers up to a maximum of \$384 per week



**Appendix I**  
**Open House**

# ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT PLAN

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## PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

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You are invited to attend an open house  
to review plans for development along  
the Atikokan River

**Location: Voyageur Mall**

**Wednesday March 20th 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

**Thursday March 21st 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

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Plans will be on display and a representative  
from the project consultants  
Hilderman Witty Crosby Hanna & Associates will be  
present to answer questions and listen to  
your comments

## Atikokan Waterfront Plan Public Openhouse

We want to know what you think about the proposals for the Atikokan Waterfront. Please take a few minutes to fill out this comment sheet.

### 1. Which projects do you think are most important:

Project	Importance		
	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Marina			
Historical Park Redevelopment			
Recreation Centre Site Development			
Little Falls Lookout			
Streetscape Improvements			
Trail System			
River Cleanup			

### 2. Circle which marina site you think is the best.

- Armstrong Point
- Arena Area
- West of River on Rooney Street

Why is your choice best? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. Do you have any other comments?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX I

### ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT PLAN PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

The following is a summary of comments and responses from members of the public who completed a comment sheet at the open house. Fifty-six (56) comment sheets were handed in and tabulated, approximately 41-45 were completed in full.

#### 1. Which projects do you think are most important?

PROJECT	IMPORTANCE			TOTAL RESPONSE
	VERY IMPORTANT	IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	
Marina	22/55%	13/33%	5/13%	40
Historical Park Redevelopment	18/44%	17/41%	6/15%	41
Recreation Centre Site Development	23/53%	15/35%	5/12%	43
Little Falls Lookout	18/44%	16/39%	7/17%	41
Streetscape Imp.	27/66%	12/29%	2/5%	41
Trail System	23/56%	15/37%	3/7%	41
River Clean-up	39/87%	5/11%	—	44

#### 2. Which Marina site do you think is the best?

Armstrong Point	12	27%
Arena Area	25	56%
West of River or Rooney Street	<u>8</u> 45	<u>18%</u> 100%

Respondents were further asked why their choice for the marina site was best.

#### Armstrong Point

- docks would be used by locals if they had access to the river for travel uptown
- central, more attractive setting with easy access for motorists; close to downtown
- cheaper, site is town property
- greater accommodation available
- interesting for seniors

#### Arena Area

- close to main street, easily accessible to/from downtown, good parking
- less crowded than Armstrong Point
- less environmental impact/dredging, lower costs
- would make better use of arena/pool area; town focal point around recreation centre
- important tourist attraction potential for the end of Main Street; popular location

#### West of River on Rooney Street

- lots of room to expand; parking and traffic away from downtown
- better to have a separate marina than combined another attraction
- it would spread out the attractive focal areas throughout the town
- less money to invest on properties to relocate residents; money saved used for other concerns
- traffic and boats will be noisy to persons living along the River; place even further west

3. Respondents were finally asked if they had any additional comments to make regarding proposals for the Atikokan Waterfront Plan. The following list presents their views.

#### OTHER COMMENTS

- (2) - development time frame essential
- (2) - foot bridge at Little Falls area over rapids
  - careful in joining walking/biking paths
  - plant many trees
- (2) - river improvement priority/wildlife habitat
  - Bunnell - Little Falls path should loop (need bridge)
  - good plan/quick 2-3 year time frame or people forget
  - future in tourism industry
- (3) - great idea/impressive presentation
  - water level too low in summer - rebuild Tracy Rapid Dam
  - streetscape should be number one
  - trails/planting/river clean-up should go ASAP

- Rec. Centre improvement with/without marina
- water wheel driven mill at Little Falls
- children's recreation improvements
- total improvement idea, but individual rights/development improvement too
- bridges must accommodate 1) pedestrians 2) bikes 3) snow machines
- 4) maintenance equipment
- development acceptable as long as costs are reasonable and done systematically
- concern for safety-trail system Bunnell Park to Little Falls should be done soon
- concern over privacy loss should trail system skirt private property

## COMMENTS

- maybe waterway impossible, what then? re: marina
- stupidity reignth in Atikokan
- is this what Atikokan really needs? How about a job creation program?
- Tracy Rapids will have to be rebuilt to raise lake to former level (1926 - 1988). This will retain passable level in Atikokan River.
- if river were cleaned-up, various businesses could have river access - (eg. White Otter Inn)
- river taxi - Gondola rides
- good idea long in coming; would help with time and money
- Township should enforce local by-laws marking public clean-up property along river
- where is financing coming?
- re-assess properties - penalizing those that do not upkeep and lower taxes for owners making improvements
- Town needs new face lift - handle vagrancy better
- fix up MacKenzie, or make another entrance point; first impressions are lasting ones; this part of town not enticing to tourists; streetscape stuff great idea
- fix streets up; more important than the other projects
- fix our streets; badly need new pavement - O'Brien
- why isn't something done with Minnow Lake Pond?
- very beneficial
- upgrading/streetscaping downtown area most important; less cost -intensive; downtown focus; project more central
- build 10' high fence down both sides of MacKenzie Avenue from Stratton equipment to Main Street; paint it nice and don't build it out of railroad ties or scrap iron from Caland; bulldoze houses or buildings that have been vacant for 3 years or more especially if Town owns them for taxes; start enforcing by-laws regarding derelict vehicles etc.

## **Appendix II**

### **Zoning & Official Plan Policies Affecting Waterfront Development**

**APPENDIX II  
ATIKOKAN WATERFRONT PROJECTS  
ZONING & OFFICIAL PLAN POLICIES**

**1. Marina/Recreation Centre Redevelopment**

**Zoning By-law:**

**Institutional - Local:** allows locally oriented cultural, recreational and public facilities and accessory uses.

- institutional uses serving local residents will be permitted whenever Council feels it is in the best interest of the residents.

**Hazard Land & Sensitive Area:** only allows boat landings and structures such as docks.

- marina building and fuel storage area would require special requirements.
- no development allowed where there would be an obstruction to flow or decrease in storage volume of the floodplain; or where watercourse represents a hazard based on MNR's "Regional Storm" level.

**Official Plan:**

**Section 1.5.9 Hazard Land and Sensitive Area**

The lands that have been designated as a hazard or a sensitive area are the lands that may be damaged or destroyed by human activities, or where there may be other features that may be dangerous when used for human developments. These areas have been identified in this Plan in order to protect or conserve such areas with the intent that development be constrained or prohibited so that sensitive features may be preserved and hazards avoided.

- s.1.5.9.1 Lands that are shown on Schedule "B" as Hazard Lands or Sensitive Areas shall be protected against any form of development or activity that would increase the hazard or where damage is probable; unless appropriate measures are first taken to remove any danger from the hazard and to remove the danger of damage.
- s.1.5.9.2 Limited development shall be permitted in the Hazard Land and Sensitive Area where it can be shown the hazard or damage represents a low risk situation and can be overcome through site engineering and is adequately demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council through a detailed Engineering report.



s.1.5.9.3 The lands that are within the Hazard Land and Sensitive Area designation that are defined by the Ministry of Natural Resources as a flood plain, should not be developed for residential purposes.

s.1.5.9.4 Low intensity, extensive recreation activities, such as walking trails or bicycle paths, shall be a permitted use in the Hazard Land and Sensitive Area designation.

## **2. Streetscape Improvements**

Zoning By-law:

Commercial - General: no restrictions.

## **3. Historical Park Redevelopment**

Zoning By-law:

Institutional - Regional: allows museums and other regionally oriented cultural, recreational and public institutional facilities.

## **4. Riverbank Enhancement**

Zoning By-law:

Hazard Lands and Sensitive Area: allows recreational activities such as hiking and bicycling; public and private parks (including playgrounds and picnic facilities) bridges and culverts.

Official Plan:

Section 1.5.9.4

- low intensity, extensive recreation activities are permitted.

Section 3.1.7

- areas of scenic or natural interest will be protected from adverse development.

Section 3.1.8

- every effort will be made to create a continuous system of open space along the Atikokan River.

**5. Bunnell Park - Natural/Passive Park**

Zoning By-law:

Hazard Lands and Sensitive Area: allows public and private parks; picnic facilities.  
Open Space: allows conservation areas; public and private parks.

**6. Derelict Vehicles, other such materials.**

Zoning By-law:

**Section 4.20 Obnoxious Uses**

- By-law does not permit land use or erection of a building or structure:
  - (a) that is or will likely become a nuisance or offensive:

- iii) by reason of unsightly storage of goods wares, merchandise, salvage, refuse matter or other such materials.