



Land Use Planning Study

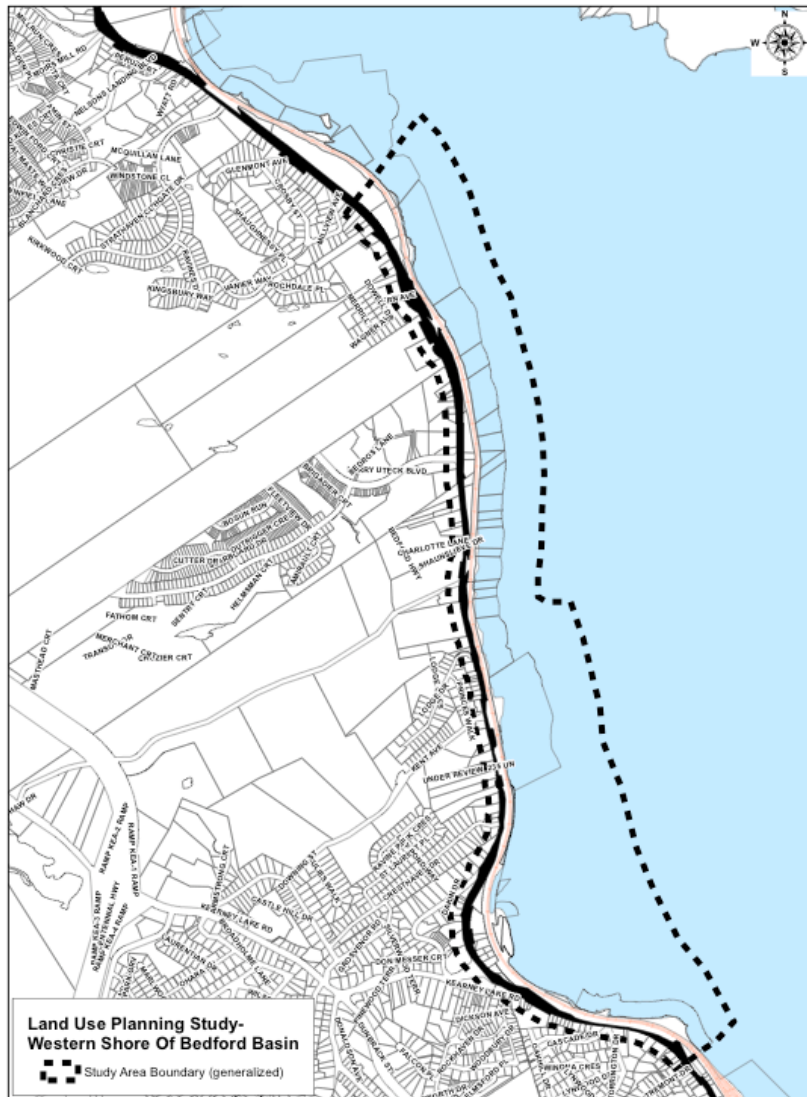
Western Shore of Bedford Basin

Stakeholder Input and Planning Themes

September 2006

Bedford Shore Planning Study

Halifax Regional Municipality has commissioned a planning study of the Western Shore of Bedford Basin (stretching from the Waterfront Phase 2 infill area in the north end to Hogan’s Point in the south). A consulting team (O’Halloran Campbell Consulting Engineers, Ekistics Planning and Design, and Harrison Associates) has been retained to undertake the study and formulate recommendations for future land use as well as the location of a trail through the area.



As part of the consulting team’s work, meetings have been held with several stakeholder organizations. This document contains a listing of main planning themes that have been identified as a result of those meetings.

Identifying Planning Themes

Planning themes have been identified by assembling stakeholder input under defined headings and by conducting a frequency count to reveal the prevalence of a particular opinion, message or viewpoint. By using this simple technique, all comments are documented, registered and “heard” by the study team and decision-makers. Within the list below, brackets are used [for example: (9)] to show the number of times a particular perspective was raised during stakeholder interviews.

Singular viewpoints are important to consider in conjunction with more commonly held opinions because they provide definition and scope to the planning theme or assist with assessment and interpretation. For example, there is a subtle but important difference in considering that 15 stakeholders indicated they supported the development of a waterfront trail whereas 4 of those stakeholders indicated they “liked the trail idea but are concerned about the loss of the shoreline.”

Consolidation of stakeholder input has resulted in the following planning themes identified for the Study Area:

- a) Trail Development
- b) Proposed Trail Connections and Linkages
- c) Transit, Transportation and Parking
- d) Parks, Viewplanes, Recreation, Natural Resources and Environment
- e) Residential Land Use
- f) Commercial Land Use
- g) Waterlots
- h) Future Sewage Treatment Plant
- i) Miscellaneous

a) Trail Development

- Support the development of trail through the study area **(15)**
- Need to ensure safety and access **(10)**
- Need to connect / link a waterfront trail with Bedford Highway or other trails **(6)**
- Like the idea of the trail but concerned about loss of shoreline / need to protect natural shoreline **(4)**
- Incorporate interpretive panels / heritage signage / incorporate natural and cultural history / **(4)**
- For economic and safety reasons, trail location should not be adjacent to the rail line **(3)**. Clear separation needed - we can expect more train traffic from the Port.
- Need to ensure appropriate trail standards / ensure a proper waterfront trail and bike trail are developed **(2)**
- The trail does not have to follow the shore line the complete length and may need to be next to the highway **(2)**
- Concerned with 4 metre trail width **(2)** and paved surface
- Supports public access to the waterfront – concerned about global trail maintenance costs for HRM
- 4 meter trail should be able to accommodate emergency vehicle access
- Get alternative vehicles (fire, emergency services) that can access the trail – buy alternative vehicles an equipment matched to the needs
- Use emergency phones **(2)** or strategically-located buttons to enhance trail safety
- Create emergency access at Hogan’s Point and Round House (use existing accesses for emergency vehicles), create new access in middle of study area and Bedford Phase 2 on north end
- Consistency with CPTED principles important
- Need to ensure access by emergency vehicles i.e. police ‘smart cars’
- Is lighting part of trail standards? – Not supportive of lighting
- Protect historically important sites and locations
- Ensure unfettered access to the shore and an unfettered view
- Phase 1 waterfront trail is well used – a natural extension
- Need public access to waterfront
- Should improve safety along Bedford Highway
- Silt buffers needed if waterfront trail developed
- Design and interpretation for accurate wayfinding
- Trail heads should be infilled and integrated with fast ferry terminals
- The heritage foundation at Prince's Lodge should be investigated
- Shoreline is under-estimated – it is very tough and will require robust construction and commitment to ongoing maintenance
- Concerned with increase in storm activity and impact on trail
- Hurricane Juan has damaged a lot of the basin shore – be careful when using map-based information
- Hard surfacing OK in order to enable multi-users
- Concerned about multi-use issues, particularly bikes vs. pedestrians

- Separate routes for walkers and wheeled users have been created in other areas: this approach may have relevance for the shoreline trail. Identify a shared-use trail generally parallel with CN tracks, but also identify alternative routing
- Shared use sometimes means ‘active transportation’ and sometimes presents conflicts (walkers vs. wheels)
- Use bilingual signs to cater to local French schools
- Aesthetics may be an issue: make trail attractive, deal imaginatively with trains, condos and concrete walls – avoid use of rip-rap. Create visual quality along the trail and preservation of vegetation important.
- Explore different ownership options (easements)
- Opportunities for new developments complementing trail use would be welcome: bike or kayak rental, refreshments etc.
- Will add significantly to HRM’s recreation infrastructure
- Will promote alternative means of transportation

b) Proposed Trail Connections and Linkages

- Access points across the Highway need to be identified and secured **(5)**
- Inter-connect the waterfront trail to Hemlock Ravine with designated parking and to Tremont Park – parking lot opportunity at Basil property **(3)**
- Connect through to Pockwock power lines **(2)**
- Ensure connection through to pedestrian network at Bedford Waterfront Phase 2
- Create access points by building tunnels at selected locations over CN tracks
- If Hemlock Ravine is being inter-connected, need to limit the number of access points into the Ravine (North Rd.) to ensure its on-going protection
- Show a network of primary and secondary trails, connected to the waterfront
- Linkage issues include highway, tracks, steep grades
- Minimize the number of crossings over / under the railroad
- Linkage to other forms of Active Transportation important
- Want to extend trail from Emscott to Hemlock Ravine and connection to city, and link to the Coach trail at Southgate
- Incorporate trail connection with Dakin Drive (used to be part of the original Bedford Highway and part of the original Post Road)
- Create a connected footbridge at the Round House and Hogan’s Point
- Round House should be focal point of trail and opened up to the public
- Potential access points include Hogan’s Point, Chinatown, Larry Uteck, Clearwater, Shaunslieve, Esquire Hotel
- Connect Mainland North Common and linear trail to Hemlock Ravine and then to new waterfront trail
- These crossing points would link the shoreline trail with major overland routes:
 - Moir’s Mill
 - Southgate Drive

- Fern Avenue
- Larry Uteck Boulevard
- Kent Avenue
- North Rd trail
- Tremont Drive
- College Road or Seton Road at MSVU

c) Transit, Transportation and Parking

- Transit needs rationalizing **(3)** – its quicker to drive than take the bus
- Link higher density developments with bus routes and enhanced transportation network **(2)** including fast ferry and commuter rail
- Bedford Highway should be wider: 3-4 lanes **(2)**
- Need Link bus – direct link to downtown needed
- Need to re-design bus stops to establish shelters, pull-overs
- Transit needs to be re-designed and used to help regulate highway crossing
- Capacity of Bedford Highway already a concern, and will be aggravated with high density development
- Bedford Highway has ever increasing traffic demands
- Limit / control / restrict new driveways on Bedford Highway
- Commercialization and residential growth should be encouraged at Bedford South and Bedford West – this may even help relieve traffic
- Concerned with proposed bike lanes on Bedford Highway
- Integrate active transportation pieces together with fast ferry, park and ride – establish Bedford Highway as a commuter-friendly service centre
- Improve public transportation and parking for trail users
- Parking areas for trail users needed
- Create pedestrian access along Bedford Highway
- Need curbs and bike safety
- Need for more traffic controls, crossings, lights, pedestrian protection, bicycle emphasis and safety controls
- Consider fast ferry stop at Birch Cove / ChinaTown
- Traffic and access are major issues affecting future development pattern
- Problem is at Fairview overpass
- Parking problems at Hemlock Ravine need to be rationalized
- Lower speed limit on Bedford Highway
- Focus plan on the three B's - boat, bike and bus
- Highway corridor may evolve into more of a residential corridor
- Make sure commercial services are compatible and don't cause additional traffic problems

d) Parks, Viewplanes, Recreation, Natural Resources and Environment

- Keep views of the water from the road / identify view planes and focal points **(8)**
- Birch Cove Linear Park should be implemented **(2)**
- Protect historic views are near the Round House
- From Chalotte Lane / Shaunslieve south should be designated as a 'quiet' shoreline with no density
- Development should be north of Charlotte's Lane
- Preserve view from key locations e.g. Larry Uteck Blvd.
- People are nostalgic about Bedford Highway – protect all viewplanes
- Viewplanes need to be identified but we can't expect to protect everything especially with 35' heights (or less)
- Are viewplanes for drivers? This needs to be put into perspective.
- Protect historical areas as part of recreational plan
- Dedicate Hogan's Point to recreation
- Ensure boat access as Hogan's Point
- Create recreational opportunities for children
- Create park areas by the trail
- Lobstering is going on
- Create node / nexus points with a focus on outdoor recreation and connecting waterfront to community
- Introduction of some park areas along Bedford Highway should be considered
- Concern with whole scale loss of greenery and trees in Study Area
- There are watercourses throughout the area (6-8 streams)
- Protect ponds / cascading ponds
- Hemlock Ravine and Bedford South to be supported as recreation areas
- Ensure Hemlock Ravine is well-managed and protected
- Protect view-plane from Hemlock Ravine
- Build a public jetty at Chinatown
- Boat launch and marina supported
- We have a tendency to focus on land use – water use is also important
- High density waterfront areas (Chinatown, Bedford Phase 2) should promote boating – fast ferry – and water-based recreation
- Need to rediscover, re-connect with the water

e) Residential Land Use

- Keep Bedford highway semi-residential / keep current residential densities / no high density residential **(4)**
- High density residential not wanted, however, high density locations at Bedford Phase 2 and Chinatown may be appropriate / with design controls and protection of greenery and public amenities **(3)**
- Establish design controls on higher density developments **(2)**

- Ensure land use hubs are mixed use and that they are inviting in order for people to visit them – potentially at ChinaTown and Clearwater **(2)**
- Mixed use higher density developments are appropriate at both ends of the area
- Ensure Birch Cove plan is background for future development at Chinatown
- Development along the waterfront needs a rhythm – breaks between various density levels, interspersed with recreation etc.
- Ensure all waterfront developments do not exclude public access
- Do not allow existing R1 to convert to commercial or multiple dwelling
- No high density or multiple development anywhere
- No high density or multiple development if it affects views
- Multiple unit residential OK – create quality developments on the water
- Connect any high density residential to transportation corridor
- A mix of densities – low rise and some high rise – however, new developments must have limited entrances onto Bedford Highway
- Land use potential and issues needs to be well understood by community
- Cost of development implies some height is necessary
- Anything between the water and railway should be multiple dwelling or commercial /multi-use
- Define “high” and “low” in study report
- Some high density is OK but identify what the tradeoffs are
- Some high density possible at Royal Hemlocks
- Need to balance views, higher densities and enhanced transportation
- It is reasonable to expect high rise developments at each end of the Study Area (ChinaTown and WDCL Phase 2 lands) and that high rises minimize impact on views from the Bedford Highway and lands to the west, while also ensuring high rises maximize views for their residents – protecting views in between
- Chinatown development needs to be integrated with public amenities – create a people place as per Bishops Landing
- The area is currently capped at the maximum for school population – need to consider development trends and impact on 3 elementary feeder schools
- Minimize development on the water side
- Make designs community-focused i.e. At Chinatown / Kearney Lake Rd., and at Travellers Hotel
- Protect Princes Lodge west of highway as a low density residential area

f) Commercial Land Use

- Overt commercialization (establishment of commercial strip) not wanted **(4)**
- Support small commercial services **(3)**
- Commercial areas used to have a village atmosphere – work to recreate this **(2)**
- Compatible commercial done tastefully is OK – i.e. community-based shops
- Need to balance evolution of commercial areas with community needs and interests

- Build a waterfront / urban / recreation / commercial node with trail access at Chinatown
- Should be a mix of commercial development to support other facilities
- Current level of commercial is acceptable, is not creating problems and is not interfering with viewplanes
- At natural nodes and access points, link commercial services to new developments
- Location of businesses on highway should be controlled to service new development areas
- Commercial service areas should be linked with safe pedestrian access on the Bedford Highway
- Commercial service areas will need to service growing residential developments to the west
- Control commercial signage – major issue – concerned with billboards and mobile signs
- Need community-based commercial uses, integrated into any higher density areas
- Protect the working waterfront – the fish markets – these define character of area
- Local commercial nodes exist (Farmer Clems to Computer Store)
- What are the tourism stats – hotels also define the plan area and are an important part of the commercial landscape – a quality or name hotel would be of interest
- A commercial tunnel effect would be undesirable

g) Waterlots

- No infill / development of waterlots except as may be required for trail, access, public safety and public amenities at defined nodes **(2)**
- If waterlots are infilled to create trail system – this needs to be dealt with on a case-to-case basis
- If water lots are allowed to infill, then build a service road, bike path and waterfront trail
- Ensure quality water lot developments
- Hogan’s Point waterlot may be owned by Province and a chunk of the Chinatown waterlot is owned by Rockingham Yacht Club
- Only infilling should be at Phase 2 Bedford Waterfront
- If there is other infilling it should be linked to creating public amenities
- If waterlots are infilled, then a Sewage Treatment Plant might be incorporated in conjunction with infill somewhere.

h) Potential Future Sewage Treatment Plant

- Determine need / size and service area before identifying site options **(6)**
- Provide opportunities to develop new facilities / amenities on top of a STP (as per new Halifax plant capability) or as new park space (as per new Dartmouth plant) or trail **(4)**
- Prefer location towards Fairview container terminal **(3)** – create a buffer with container terminal
- Location at Birch Cove suggested, as part of new park system there **(2)**
- Ensure STP is appropriately worked into a landscape plan / aesthetics **(2)**
- Avoid DND mooring (6 de-gossing stations)
- Servicing demands for Wentworth Heights & Bedford South should be monitored
- Could it / should it be located inland to service development with treated effluent piped to harbour?
- Impact of sea level rise?
- Not necessary to have trail around it but should be considered
- Match the STP with public objectives
- Low profile/sight lines
- Sewage outfall at Ocean Brook apartments – what is level of treatment there?
- Other possible location would be at end of Larry Uteck Blvd. – create node and access there
- Watch historical features at Hogan’s Point if that location is being considered
- Treatment level may be an issue if location near either fish plant is being considered
- Need to clean up Basin

i) Miscellaneous

- Encouraged HRM is doing study
- Study will help position HRM to deal with senior governments, negotiate with water lot owners, ensure access points and create opportunities
- Link the Bedford Shore land use plan to the Regional Plan
- Leverage development \$\$ into public amenities and link to approvals process
- In establishing land use / mixed use nodes, development needs to be carefully managed
- Use form-based codes plus design guidelines for massing, height of buildings, materials, cornices and transparencies at street level
- Utilize design competitions for projects with pre-approved status
- Bishops Landing sets standard for waterfront developments, “bookends” concept for study area
- Is there really development demand in the area? Why would we populate the waterfront vs. creating simple, smaller access points to the water’s edge?
- Very concerned with the fiscal costs of trail and waterfront development – HRM has more important priorities such as fixing existing streets and infrastructure

List Of Stakeholders Interviewed

(May to July 2006)

- Fernleigh Park Homeowners Association
- Halifax Northwest Trails Association
- Rockingham Residents Association
- Greater Princess Lodge Residents Association
- Rockingham Heritage Society
- United Gulf
- Centennial Developments Ltd.
- Geoff Regan, MP
- Andy Fillmore, HRM Urban Design
- Mary Ann McGrath
- Friends of the Hemlock Ravine
- Down-East Mobility
- Fishermans Market
- Diana Whalen, MLA
- Clearwater
- Hon. Len Goucher
- Waterfront Development Corporation Ltd.