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**TO:** GENERAL COMMITTEE

**SUBJECT:** MEMORIAL SQUARE DESIGN CONCEPT APPROVAL

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GENERAL MANAGER OF INFRASTRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT & CULTURE

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER APPROVAL:** JON M. BABULIC, *J. M. Babulic*  
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

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**RECOMMENDED MOTION**

1. That the Memorial Square Conceptual Design as outlined in Staff Report ENG022-11 be approved in principle.

**PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND**

2. In the 2005 The Patty Xenos proposal for Memorial Square noted Memorial Square should be embellished to become the most important "people place" at the heart of downtown Barrie. Recommendations stated that the site was best for a non-permanent stage ("temporary") that would be best positioned at the lower portion of the square. Refer to Appendix "A" for a brief synopsis on Memorial Square's Vision and Strategic Opportunities.
3. In October 2008, the Culture Department held a design Charette for Memorial Square to provide a forum for community engagement with a variety of stakeholders to gather information and ideas to establish the principles for a vibrant, multi-use civic public place based on surrounding land uses, development proposals, the existing Cenotaph and the use of the Square for events and festivals. The resulting document entitled "A Gathering Place" identified a list of commonalities, consensus and complimentary elements that an ultimate "re-visioning" of the Square should consider or accommodate. These elements were noted as follows:
  - a) Cenotaph to remain in design as a focal point
  - b) Fred Grant Street should be eliminated from final design
  - c) Eliminate the definition of roads and only consider seamless roads
  - d) Hard surface spaces
  - e) Introduction of historic piece
  - f) Include historic reference link to 9 Mile Portage
  - g) Seamless edges – patio's/cafes along edges
  - h) Performance Theatre/Space (now proposed in Bayview Park, ENG011-11)
  - i) Pedestrian access
  - j) Linkage to Kempenfelt Bay
  - k) Amenities

4. In Spring 2009, City Staff were directed to prepare the Terms of Reference to undertake the conceptual design of four (4) waterfront parks to revitalize and redevelop the waterfront park system. The outcome of this RFP was to resolve several issues that remained outstanding namely:
  - a) The programming needs for Bayview Park due to the future decommissioning of the underground water reservoir.
  - b) The design development for Memorial Square based on the principles generated from the October 2008 Design Charette identifying Memorial Square as "the gathering place".
  - c) The programming needs and open space configuration of Centennial Park after the westerly relocation of Lakeshore Drive onto the former railway corridor. This relocation "opens up" approximately 10 additional acres of waterfront open space.
  - d) The conceptual design and programming development for the future Military Heritage Park, east of the Southshore Community Centre, within Allandale Station Park.
5. In early Summer 2009, work began to prepare the conceptual designs for the four (4) waterfront parks as noted above. The project title was rebranded as the "Waterfront Parks Initiative".
6. Prior to the RFP, City Council had entertained many different concepts and design approaches for both Memorial Square and Bayview Park. A brief synopsis of this history is attached in Appendix "A".

#### **ANALYSIS**

7. Several stakeholder meetings and a Public Information Centre were held in Spring 2010 to provide the public and a variety of special interest groups an opportunity to critique the concepts and ideas being created. One concept for the downtown area was that a more permanent stage for outdoor performances was desired. This comment directed design efforts towards 2 downtown spaces: Memorial Square and Bayview Park.
8. A history of Memorial Square up to the official naming of the Square as "Memorial Square" in 1993, was presented as part of the "Gathering Place" document, and a copy has been placed in the Councillor's Lounge for reference.
9. With Memorial Square's natural topography sloping towards the lake (approximately 3.6 metres or 12 feet), the amphitheatre effect creates a natural location for an outdoor theatre. It was noted that infrastructure for a permanent stage is not ideal because it would obstruct views to the waterfront and the size/shape of a stage varies greatly depending on the types of events being programmed.
10. Memorial Square is currently being used for a variety of events and festivals throughout the year, which are organized by the City of Barrie, Downtown BIA, and a host of other community groups. These events include Ribfest, Promenade Days, Tree Lighting, and Winterfest. Ceremonial events are focused on the Cenotaph and include Remembrance Day, Battle of Britain, and Battle of the Atlantic.
11. In late June 2010 following the Public Information Centre for the Waterfront Parks Initiative, the Waterfront park designs were displayed at three recreation centres during July, August and September 2010 to allow the residents in outer areas of the City to partake in the design review process. Comments received specifically for Memorial Square from this three month period are attached in Appendix "B". From this information, conceptual drawings for a revised Memorial Square concept was prepared for discussion.

12. Based on this information, a conceptual design for Memorial Square was presented to various members of the Downtown BIA, the Outdoor Performance Centre Committee, City Council members and staff in design development meetings in early December 2010 and again in early February 2011. One of the main objectives was to create a seamless pedestrian link from Dunlop Street southwards towards Heritage Park so that both open spaces could be integrated and considered as one functional area for events, festivals and public gatherings.
13. Memorial Square was again reviewed for the potential as an outdoor performance space but as Bayview Park has been determined as Barrie's permanent outdoor performance stage area, only temporary, short-term staging opportunities are suggested to exist inside Memorial Square for events and festivals.
14. This Proposed Concept for Memorial Square is attached in Appendix "C" and has the attributes of a large urban square that could accommodate a variety of uses, populations, and activities rather than its current garden and green space character. The attributes are described as follows:
  - a) Cenotaph relocated to the central view point from Owen Street to provide sufficient space around the Cenotaph to give the structure prominence in the Square and to allow for the military ceremonies to occur around the structure.
  - b) The existing road network is being replaced with wide pedestrian, sloped "avenues" along each side of the Square thus giving pedestrians priority over vehicles. While these avenues are mainly designed for pedestrians, they can be used at times for any necessary deliveries to businesses and shops that front onto the Square. Similar to the St. Lawrence Market in Toronto where early morning deliveries occur before pedestrian activities take place, this concept would be similar for Memorial Square. In addition, the western side of the Square has the option of maintaining a current vehicular route from Dunlop Street, down Fred Grant Street to Simcoe Lane. The definition of this vehicular route within the pedestrian square would be defined with vehicular bollards.
  - c) The western edge has a water feature that parallels the majority of its length from Dunlop Street to Simcoe Street reflecting the historical 9-Mile Heritage Portage Route that originates from Memorial Square. On the eastern edge, the pedestrian "avenue" is narrower in width, but is sloping for universal accessibility. With both "avenues" forming edges to the Square, this allows for activities to spill into the square from adjacent buildings thus animating the space with pedestrian-scale activities such as cafes, art displays, vendor stalls, etc.
  - d) Grade differences are resolved through the installation of terracing located in the square and a grade wall near Dunlop Street to keep a continual approximate 4% grade along the former Fred Grant Square alignment. This allows for an urban square or "piazza" in the central portion of the square, while the grade walls allow for informal seating and viewing opportunities over Heritage Park and the waterfront.
  - e) High canopy deciduous trees are placed along the edges of the square to shade pedestrian linkages to the waterfront and to focus views from Dunlop Street to the waterfront while keeping the square open and flexible for event opportunities.
  - f) To create a continuous link between the Square and Heritage Park, it is proposed to raise the Simcoe Street road surface with a long "speed hump" over the entire Square frontage into Simcoe Street. The surface material can be designed with a vehicular strength unit pavers and the road width can be defined with vehicular bollards so that during events and festivals, this level grade crossing creates a seamless transition for the public between the two open spaces.

15. In moving this plan forward, City staff have identified that this concept builds on the Patty Xenos Plan and lays out the design frame work for the Square with current trends and thinking on traffic management within the downtown core, the use and function of the square as a more flexible, urban space and maintaining the Cenotaph as a prominent icon in the Square; all the time recognizing that it may be impacted by development opportunities fronting the Square.
16. Veterans Affairs Canada currently has a five-year funding initiative entitled the Community War Memorial Program. This Program partners with communities across Canada to build cenotaphs/monuments and major additions to existing ones, to commemorate the achievements and sacrifices of those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict and peace. Although applications are only reviewed on a quarterly basis, and for major additions, that have a capital cost of greater than \$25,000, this Program may provide financial assistance of eligible costs up to a maximum of 50% of the total project costs related to building a cenotaph/monument or a major addition, and not exceeding \$50,000 per project. The Program is in place until March 31, 2015. Federal funding could allow for additional grants and fundraising to be sourced so that the design and implementation of the Square could begin.
17. The largest impact on the Square will be the redevelopment proposal for the Hotel-Convention Centre site located at 1-15 Bayfield Street. As the 2008 Design Charette reviewed the impact this former development's proposal had on the square, all future applications should identify and illustrate their influence on the Square so that the vision and function of the Square are enhanced and not impacted negatively by the proposal.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

18. There are no environmental matters that have to be considered in the development of this Report.

#### **ALTERNATIVES**

19. The following Alternative is available for consideration by General Committee:

##### **Alternative #1**

General Committee could decide not to approve the Memorial Square conceptual design.

This alternative is not recommended for the following reasons:

- The concept design can assist in the City's review of future development impacts on the Square.
- The Downtown BIA branding could be implemented into the Square detailing so that the Square can become the City's urban "gathering place" for larger City and Community events and festivals.
- Having a vision for the Square in place, allows for the Downtown BIA and Tourism Barrie to market the City's urban core as a place for growth, business and tourism opportunities.
- The City will not take advantage of the current business and public interest and "energy" being provided through the Waterfront Parks Initiative and current rebranding studies being undertaken to promote Barrie's downtown as a cultural and artistic centre.

#### **FINANCIAL**

20. Staff are aware of funding opportunities available from Veterans' Affairs Canada to build or add major additions to existing cenotaphs and monuments. As this funding opportunity is capped up to a maximum of 50% of total eligible project costs, not exceeding \$50,000, City staff could explore the potential for additional funding sources.

21. This project is currently not included in the ten year Capital Plan, therefore, future phases of this project including pre-design, design and construction will need to be considered in upcoming Business Plans and in the context of other competing capital renewal and capacity needs.

**LINKAGE TO 2010 – 2014 COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN**

22. The recommendation(s) included in this Staff Report support the following goal identified in the 2010-2014 City Council Strategic Plan:
- ☒ Create a Vibrant and Healthy City Centre
23. Through the redevelopment of Memorial Square, the pedestrian linkages between the Square and Heritage Park are made stronger through better visibility, a widened pedestrian crossing area and enhanced tree canopies along the edge of the Square.
24. The Square's redesign will allow for more event and programming spaces within the central portions of the site while enhancing the edges of the square with pedestrian promenades, high canopy trees and spatial opportunities for cafés and building uses to spill out into the Square to animate the space, to increase exposure of the Square as a "people place" and make the Square more usable for events, festivals and activities.

**APPENDIX "A"**

**Brief Synopsis on Memorial Square's Vision and Strategic Opportunities**

1. In 1994, the City's Community –based Strategic Plan Mission Statement stated:

"As Central Ontario's premier waterfront City, Barrie strives to afford its current and future residents varied opportunities to enjoy an enhanced and secure quality of life in a prosperous and ecologically sustainable community".
2. In 1997, City Council adopted resolution #97-P-33 which directed staff to undertake a specific review of the City's waterfront through the initiation of a Waterfront Master Plan. Over the next two (2) years, extensive public input and meetings were held with various stakeholders, special interest groups, the Downtown BIA and the Chamber of Commerce to generate a complete master plan for six (6) distinct study areas along the waterfront. These were identified as: the Northshore, Downtown/Heritage Park and Memorial Square/Marina, Westshore – Centennial Park, Southshore – Allandale Station Park, Minet's Point Road to Coxmill Road and finally, Coxmill Road to the City Limits.
3. In June 2000, this Study resulted into the creation of the 2000 Waterfront Master Plan which was adopted by City Council in Resolution #00-A-371 as part of Report #23 endorsed by General Committee in Resolution #00-G-217.
4. Based on the recommendations within this 2000 Master Plan, between 2000 and 2005, a variety of master plans were developed for several of the waterfront parks including The Gables Park, Tyndale Park, the Allandale Station Park, improvements were made to the public exposure of the Marina and Heritage Park to name a few. Several parks that did not have master plans created for them included Bayview Park and Centennial Park.
5. In 2003, a group of Barrie citizens began the process of bringing a permanent, outdoor multi-purpose performance centre to Barrie's waterfront at Memorial Square. Following a variety of meetings, in fall 2003, City Council overwhelming supported the proposal and granted permission in principle for the community group to proceed.
6. The main goal of the Outdoor Performance Centre Committee, which included members of the Downtown BIA and senior staff from City Hall, was to make Memorial Square an urban asset and a focal point for many community-based cultural functions with the vision of an open and multi-purpose design that could accommodate a vast range of artistic performances and other community events.
7. In 2005, the City invited Patty Xenos Design Inc. to make a presentation of their experiences in commercial master planning to the Mayor and members of City Council and staff. Along with their experience, the potential of Barrie's downtown area, and merits and advantages of evolving the Next Wave Downtown Revitalization Plan into a Master plan was discussed.
8. As a result, in April 2005, the City of Barrie entered into an agreement with Patty Xenos Design Inc. and associated professionals for the preparation of a commercial master plan for the City's historic downtown and its waterfront.
9. In January 2006, the Downtown Commercial Master Plan (DCMP) was presented and endorsed by City Council in Council Motion # 06-G-007.

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10. One section within the DCMP identified Memorial Square as needing to be enlarged and embellished so as to become the most important and significant people place at the heart of Downtown Barrie. One of the characteristics identified was the creation of a green open space to connect Heritage Park into the downtown core while maintaining traffic patterns that existed around the square.
  11. With the vision established for Memorial Square by both the Outdoor Performance Centre Committee and the Patty Xenos Plan as being a public space where performing arts could be integrated into the site, the Culture Department held a Design Charette in Fall 2008 with citizens, downtown businesses, planners, architects, designers and City staff, to lay the foundation for the design principles of the site. The result of the Charette established a booklet entitled "A Gathering Place" which summarized the ideas and potential for the Square's redevelopment. One key recommendation from both the Patty Xenos Plan and the Design Charette was that Memorial Square should not be considered for a permanent outdoor performance stage.

APPENDIX "B"

**Survey Results and Public Comments from the Summer 2010 Waterfront Parks Display**

<b>2. Memorial Square (do you agree or disagree with the following)</b>			
	Agree	Disagree	Response Count
Relocate cenotaph, enhance area for Remembrance Day activities	54.2% (58)	45.8% (49)	107
Keep streets on both sides of square as part of design	59.8% (64)	40.2% (43)	107
Close square permanently to all vehicles (pedestrian square only)	73.7% (84)	26.3% (30)	114
East side gardens provide green space/lawn for passive use	94.3% (99)	5.7% (6)	105
West side terrace for use as urban shade areas/café's etc.	87.7% (93)	12.3% (13)	106
Enhance area around Spirit Catcher as "Marine Village" with restaurants, buildings, events, concessions, boat tours etc.	82.0% (91)	18.0% (20)	111
How can we make Memorial Square better?			52
		<b>answered question</b>	<b>116</b>
		<b>skipped question</b>	<b>4</b>

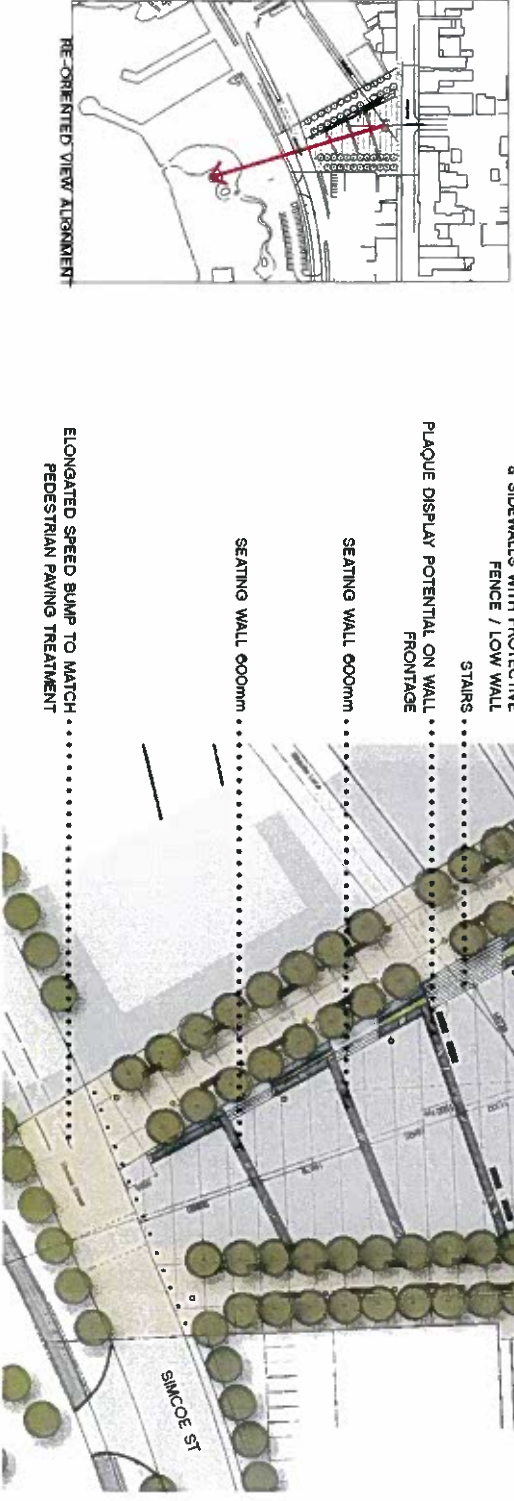
**Memorial Square – How can we make Memorial Square better?**  
(Comment section)

1. I agree with the water feature. I would make sure to keep some parking in the area – the lot on west side of the Square.
2. Keep it pedestrian and cyclist friendly – add bicycle racks.
3. The Military Park is a considerable distance from the present central cenotaph at "Memorial Square". Would it not make sense to keep it all together...however not if the Military park is to be off the beaten track...perhaps rethinking Memorial Square and how big it should be? Spirit Catcher is grand and area could have a combination tourist information booth and ticket sales for tour boats and washrooms.
4. Memorial Square should be keep as a "people place" with no cars allowed on the east side of the square. Simcoe Street should be removed from its present location except on the west side of the square as a flow from Dunlop Street to the continuation of Simcoe Street by the present parking lot. Lakeshore should be closed east of Bayfield Street for festival occasions.



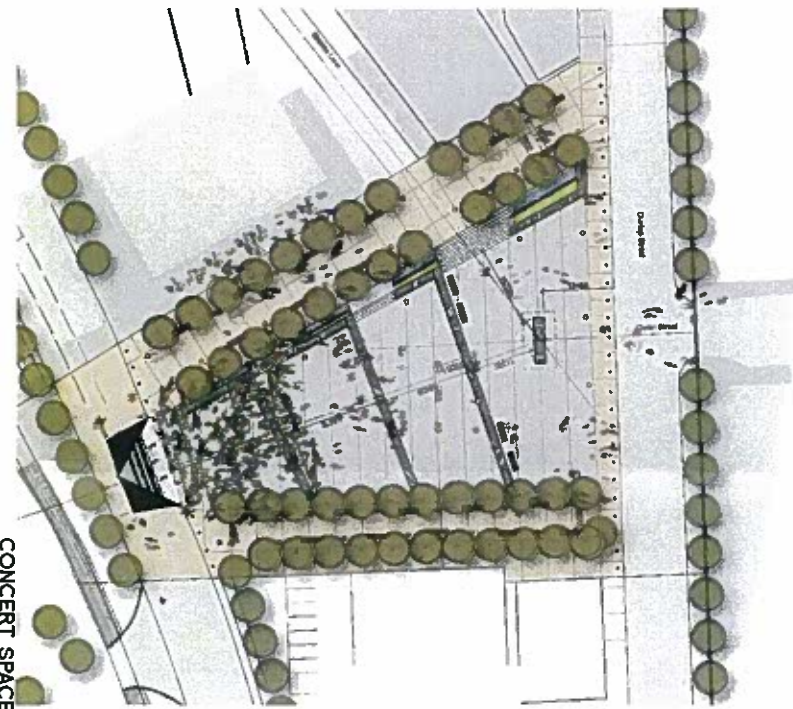
5. Would it be more appropriate to relocate the cenotaph to the Military Heritage Park? Create an architecturally themed (nautical or rail) boardwalk or a pier with opportunities for businesses such as restaurants, cafes and pubs with patios, as well as boutique retail. Look at Pier 39 in San Francisco. A water taxi type ferry linking all the waterfront parks would also be a good option.
6. Relocate or retire Spirit Catcher – sculpture is not really representative of Barrie. Uneasy feeling when walking near it that wings/blades are going to drop one of these days.
7. More transit docking for boats. marina office/ marine village concept – but do not need more restaurants.
8. Maintain passive use elements, love the idea as a farmer's market location.
9. More police presence in this park; people dealing drugs out of this park and thus it is not an area that I really want to hang out in. We want it to be family –friendly. Spending money to make it look nicer won't benefit the city if people don't want to hang out there due to illegal activity.
10. I don't go with my kids there, men sleeping on grass.
11. No cars, more cafes, more pedestrian friendly.
12. Allow more boats to anchor to enjoy it.
13. Keep it fantastic, clean and no garbage.
14. From pictures, I cannot see ramps; need wheelchair access.
15. I like the long term vision as presented; closing the square for vehicles for events.
16. Provide more benches for sitting.
17. More cafes and closed to vehicles.
18. Add band shell/info centre where cenotaph is now.
19. Use some perennial flowers; pedestrian only. Include marine heritage by Spirit catcher with Carley and Delaney boat builder information as marine heritage was integral part of transportation development in past, plus native portage route.
20. More benches, washrooms, flowers.
21. Do not allow development south of Simcoe Street to project east of current BMO building. The visual window south from Dunlop Street towards the lake is reduced by 50% if development follows the current line of Fred Grant Street.
22. Pedestrian only, restaurants around and along Dunlop.
23. On my first Remembrance Day after moving here 3 years ago, I had a disappointing view from up Owen Street but I've since arrived earlier on that day and stand on the greens of the square. Please, no need to spend extra money on relocation for the infrequency of the cenotaph's use.

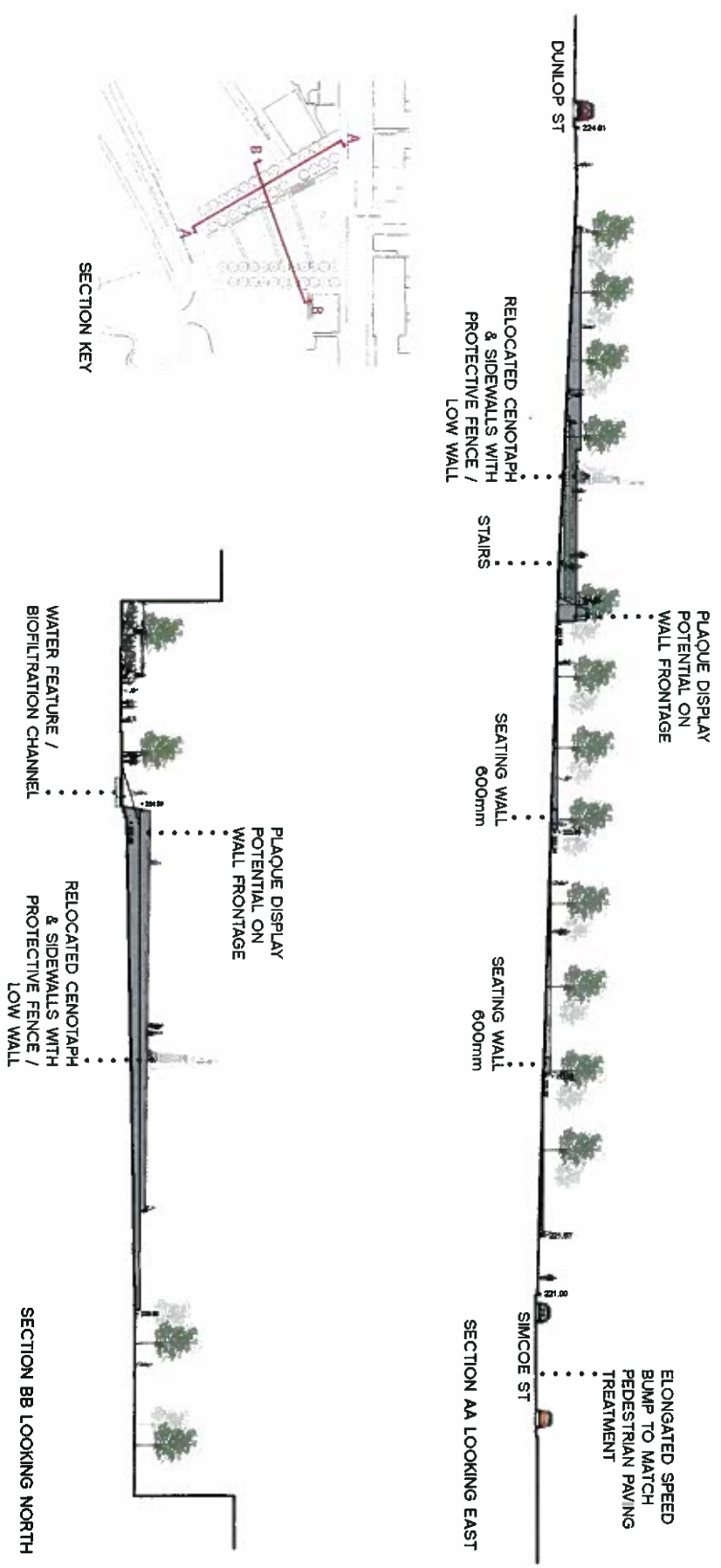
APPENDIX "C"  
Proposed Conceptual Design for Memorial Square



**BARRIE WATERFRONT PLAN**

Master Plan and Precedents  
March 25/ 2011





Memorial Square Sections  
March 25/ 2011  
**BARRIE WATERFRONT PLAN**

