

# Heritage Park Master Plan

A Park of Places

Final Report  
April 29, 2022

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# Executive Summary

## Heritage Park Master Plan A Park of Places

### Why a Master Plan?

Heritage Park's location within a revitalizing downtown and beautiful waterfront has created a vital but over-utilized community hub. The Master Plan seeks to ensure the future of the Park as one that enhances connections to the downtown civic centre, Meridian Place, and the line of park system around Kempenfelt Bay. In the future this public space will prove to be one that has complimented the recent and planned public space developments downtown, while supporting a wide range of benefits to residents, visitors, and local businesses.

Heritage Park hosts many of the key community events and countless ways to gather in all four seasons. However, a number of key elements of the park are at the end of their useful life. For example electrical and water services for events are in need of replacement, considering the needs of large scale and small scale community events that take place at the Park. The current water feature requires upgrading to current water service and water quality standards, while there is a desire to include the adjacent washrooms in future accessibility (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) standards upgrades. Existing pathways are degraded and require more lighting.

The intention of the master planning process from the outset has been to secure the long-term resilience of the park, as a destination for gathering, peaceful walks, and events. The Master Plan directs future upgrades and renovations to align with the needs of visitors, while leveraging existing and future opportunities for programming. This includes supporting active transportation and meeting current accessibility and universal design standards, creating spaces that are safe and resilient for event hosting, creating spaces that introduce visitors to natural elements for their emotional and physical benefit, allowing safe and secure visual and physical access to the water, and ensuring the future of the Park is maintained as a preeminent, outstanding amenity for the City of Barrie.

Barrie is growing and diversifying. Its downtown is being revitalized with new public spaces. Now is the time to take the lead on a socially, culturally, and environmentally inclusive public space design. Heritage Park is nearing the end of its programmable life-cycle, presenting a generational opportunity to create a well-designed public space with bold landscape and iconic architectural forms that will serve the people of Barrie, providing innumerable benefits with many measurable outcomes.

## Mapping a Strategy



## A Park of Places, the Key Initiatives

Heritage Park plays host to diverse passive and active programming which demands a suite of initiatives to guide future outcomes. To define the vision that the Master Plan communicates, there are six Key Initiatives that provide a programmatic and experiential foundation to inform future development.

Heritage Park will be a *park of places*.

### 1/ A four-season place.

Heritage Park should be an attractive, educational, and accessible place all year round. Planting should offer interest all year. Diverse meadow planting will offer winter interest and shade trees will provide relief during the warmer months. Main paths into the site should continue to be safely managed during winter. Winter events will be accounted for and programming opportunities should be accommodated, while considering winter comfort and 'winter city' strategies.

### 2/ A delightful place.

Heritage Park should be a desirable and safe place, even after the sun has set. Extending the hours of planned events would be aided by a well-planned lighting scheme. The design of the spaces and elements should provide interest and enhance park experience. Lighting should accentuate the architectural and landscape character of the park, while artistic lighting could be a focal point. Temporary and permanent art and artfully designed spaces should continue to be considered as a positive addition to the urban public realm.

### 3/ A natural place.

Heritage Park should be a restorative place, somewhere that provides solace in natural elements for visitors. Perennial gardens (native and/or urban-tolerant species) will support a heightened multi-sensory visitor experience informed by species present in the regional landscape, while building capacity to respond to a changing climate. The planting plan should have ecological function, nurturing the well-being of birds and insects, and a maintenance plan that supports this.

### 4/ An accessible place.

Heritage Park visitors should find a seamless and uninterrupted experience of the park, no matter their age, ability, or cultural background. Permanent and temporary cultural programming should be welcoming to all. AODA compliance is a binding requirement, however thinking beyond this to universal design, Heritage Park should be easy to navigate, intuitive, and a pleasure to use by all. The Park should support infrastructure to make it easy to arrive via active and alternative transportation modes, from water or path network.

### 5/ An eventful place.

Heritage Park should accommodate hosting City events, with consideration for maintenance, event turnaround, and infrastructure needs (electrical and water.) Large lawns, widened paths for market stalls, and viewing areas for water-based events should all be considered. Spaces should be designed to be multi-functional, allowing for varied programming, including passive use. Passive use is an important part of Heritage Park's programming and should be thought about within the context of an active and vital centrally-located Park.

### 6/ A water place.

Heritage Park should renew visitors connection to water, as an amenity and resource. Views and physical access to Kempenfelt Bay will be improved for accessibility, comfort, and accommodation of naturalized planting. The existing water feature should be redesigned to better reflect the renewed park programming. It should be multi-functional and accessible, providing various ways to safely interact with water. Passive and active engagement with water should be considered, as an artistic and restorative element.

## Illustrating the Opportunities



Top left image: A re-imagined water feature will increase opportunities for universal play and gathering, while being a multi-functional space, acting as an open plaza on-demand.

Top right image: A perennial meadow punctuated with trees will bring shade and serenity to downtown and the waterfront. The meadow will support increased ecosystem benefits and regeneration in an urban environment, providing habitat for butterflies and birds.

Bottom: New ways to visually and physically connect with Kempenfelt Bay are introduced, including canoe launches (with temporary storage) and viewing decks that enhance the regenerative experience of Barrie's most vital natural amenity.





1. See "Recommendations Concerning Wastewater operations and Water Operations" for parking and vehicle circulation requirements
2. Consider additional lighting for features in plazas (lighting for safety with the consideration for light pollution on all paths)



## Master Plan Concept

# 1.0 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of Master Plan

The purpose of the Master Plan is to guide the redevelopment of Heritage Park. Key elements and infrastructure are currently at an age where reflection on how they serve the residents of the City of Barrie is required.

The Master Plan Report will guide the future redevelopment of Heritage Park to meet public expectations for inclusivity, accessibility, and environmental resilience, along with the needs of residents and City programming.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Project

The initial project vision served as a starting point presented by the City of Barrie early in the process to inspire discussion about the needs of the residents and park visitors, and form a basic set of criteria for assessment of the existing conditions. The vision has been revisited throughout the process to stay relevant to the ongoing Master Plan development.

The Heritage Park Master Plan needs to address the following:

- Social cohesion and equity
- Increasing diversity (age, culture, gender identity)
- Pedestrian access and active modes of transportation
- Universal access
- Connectivity of waterfront open spaces and natural heritage systems
- Serving the needs of an evolving downtown community and densifying city
- Four season passive and events-based programming
- “Winter city” design
- Mental health and restorative landscapes of natural elements
- Resilient and ecologically beneficial planting design
- Water access for visitor experience and park programming
- Landscape education and interpretation
- Contemporary urban life of an evolving downtown and region
- Park infrastructure upgrades including electrical, water, and storm water servicing
- Entrepreneurial space for new Canadians



### **1.3 Area of Study and Adjacent Influences**

The area of study for the Master Plan and Concept Design is defined in Figure 1 below. It is bounded by Simcoe Street and the foot of Mulcaster Street to the north, with the Bayfield Basin Transient Marina to the west, and Kempenfelt Bay to the south and east. In addition to the defined project area, the site context includes a multitude of inputs and pressures that have influence on the kind of park that Heritage Park is and can be.



Figure 1: Map of Study Area

The park's location and adjacent influences define it as a passive activity and event hosting destination. The Trans-Canada Trail and North Shore Trail tie the park into the greater active transportation and recreational trail network. Heritage Park provides an important visual and cultural connection to Kempenfelt Bay from downtown and Meridian Place. Located in the provincially-mandated Urban Growth Centre, the local population (with many adjacent multi-unit residences planned) and number of park visitors will increase over the coming years.

City of Barrie planning documents and regional regulations, such as the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, influence pertinent historical and future outcomes of Heritage Park, as well.

## **Planning and Regulations**

### **Official Plan**

The City of Barrie adopted its most recent Official Plan on February 14, 2022 that outlines land use planning policies and sets the framework for regulations and standards of municipal zoning by-laws, in particular for the development of the waterfront. Generally, Heritage Park should conform to the general policies, land use policies, and urban design guidelines outlined in the Official Plan to maintain the natural heritage of the waterfront (note: "Environmental Protection Area Classification") and address the matters of suitable community design.

### **Municipal Zoning By-laws**

The Municipal Zoning By-law regulations are established in conformity with the City of Barrie's Official Plan to determine how land and buildings may be used. Heritage Park must comply with the "Open Space" land use designations and regulations defined by the Municipal Zoning By-laws (note: Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2009-141, August 2009).

### **Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan**

The Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan was created by the City of Barrie in 2010 and advises strategies of policies, operations, maintenance and capital improvements for recreational and parks services. The extensive planning and development embodied in the Master Plan will inform future decision-making to deliver high-quality facilities and services to the public. Note this Plan for city-wide park and recreation context and policies on the reduction of barriers to park participation and "greening" strategies.

### **Outdoor Recreation Facility Study**

In 2019 the City undertook a gap analysis and projection of existing amenity needs. Heritage Park should reference and confirm any needs in terms of programming and amenities. Note that the Study suggests a destination-style splash pad to be located at Heritage Park, replacing the existing water play feature, which has reached the end of its lifespan. The Study confirms the need for outdoor exercise equipment to be located at strategic locations on the trail network, with ease of access for older adults.

### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)**

Heritage Park will be designed in accordance with the AODA standards, to ensure the park is inclusive and does not restrict use or access, in compliance with the accessibility standards for the Design for Public Spaces with Ontario Regulation 413/12 of the Act.

#### Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) Regulation Area

The Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Regulation Areas defines the shoreline regulations for Kempenfelt Bay. Natural hazardous areas in need of regulation are identified within the Lake Simcoe watershed, watching for flooding, steep slopes, erosion-prone areas, and wetlands.

#### Urban Forest Strategy

The Urban Forest Strategy was developed by the City of Barrie on November 25, 2013 as a policy framework for the management and sustainability of urban forests. The strategy informs the planning, planting, protection, maintenance, and care required for trees, forests, greenspaces, and other ecological elements.

#### Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and Implementation Plan

The City of Barrie developed a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and accompanying Implementation Plan in 2017 to build community resilience to the risks of climate change. The Climate Change adaptation Strategy identifies seven goals detailing 59 Actions, seeking to offset the impacts of extreme heat and cold, invasive species, water quality, temperature variability, flooding, erosion, and extreme events, many of which have implications on the future development of Heritage Park. Under Goal 5: Protect Biodiversity and Enhance Ecosystem Functions, Action 5.7 states "promote the planting of native vegetation along lakes, creeks, and ravines to reduce erosion risk, maintenance needs, and enhance local biodiversity." Under Goal 7: Build Community Resilience, Action 7.4 states "encourage natural and constructed shade and cooling structures on public and private property."

#### A Place to Grow

The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe 2019 was prepared and approved under the Places to Grow Act (2005) as a framework that considers the long term by guiding physical and economic growth of the area. The Growth Plan projects Barrie's population to increase to 253,000 by 2041. This plan defines the Downtown Barrie Urban Growth Centre, which has been designated to host higher-density growth and intensification, bordering Heritage Park. Additionally, the plan promotes the importance of planning for human and environmental health and well-being.



# 2.0 What Kind of Park is Heritage?

## 2.1 Historical + Regional Influences

### Site History

Heritage Park is sited on infill in Kempenfelt Bay. Infilling this part of the Bay began in 1972, with development of structures on site began in 1991. More than 100 years ago Barrie's waterfront was occupied by industry and railways and over the past few decades has changed greatly. The Government Dock and various boat-related industries occupied the shoreline, and accessing the water for recreation and public use was more difficult than it is today. There was a great Indigenous portage landing place located adjacent to the Park, the history of which is interpreted at Meridian Place. Exploring the history of this part of the waterfront reveals a palimpsest of occupation and function that add to the waterfront's richness and further embeds its cultural and ecological significance to the region.

Presently, Heritage Park occupies a passive use and ceremonial place on the waterfront, as a destination to experience Kempenfelt Bay and busy with the activity of large events. The Park's history is not so subtly entwined with the waters of Kempenfelt Bay and its shoreline.

The history of Heritage Park tells a story of dramatic change. A change that highlights Barrie's relationship to Kempenfelt Bay over the last fifty years. It brings to light how important it is to ensure Heritage Park's role in the continued development of equitable waterfront access for all while building on the existing relationship the residents have with Kempenfelt Bay.



Figure 2: Image of Barrie's waterfront in 1970, showing an outline of the future Heritage Park. Image courtesy of the Barrie Historical Archives.

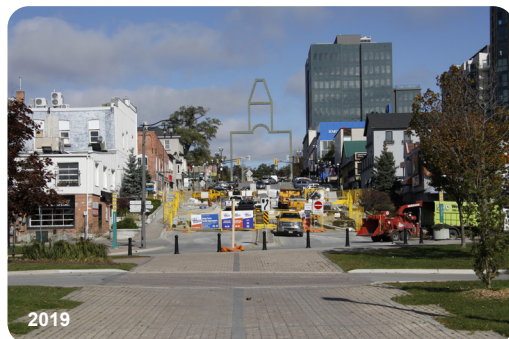


Figure 3: Mulcaster Street, from Kempfenfelt Bay before and after the establishment of Heritage Park.  
(Historical image credit: Barrie Archives)

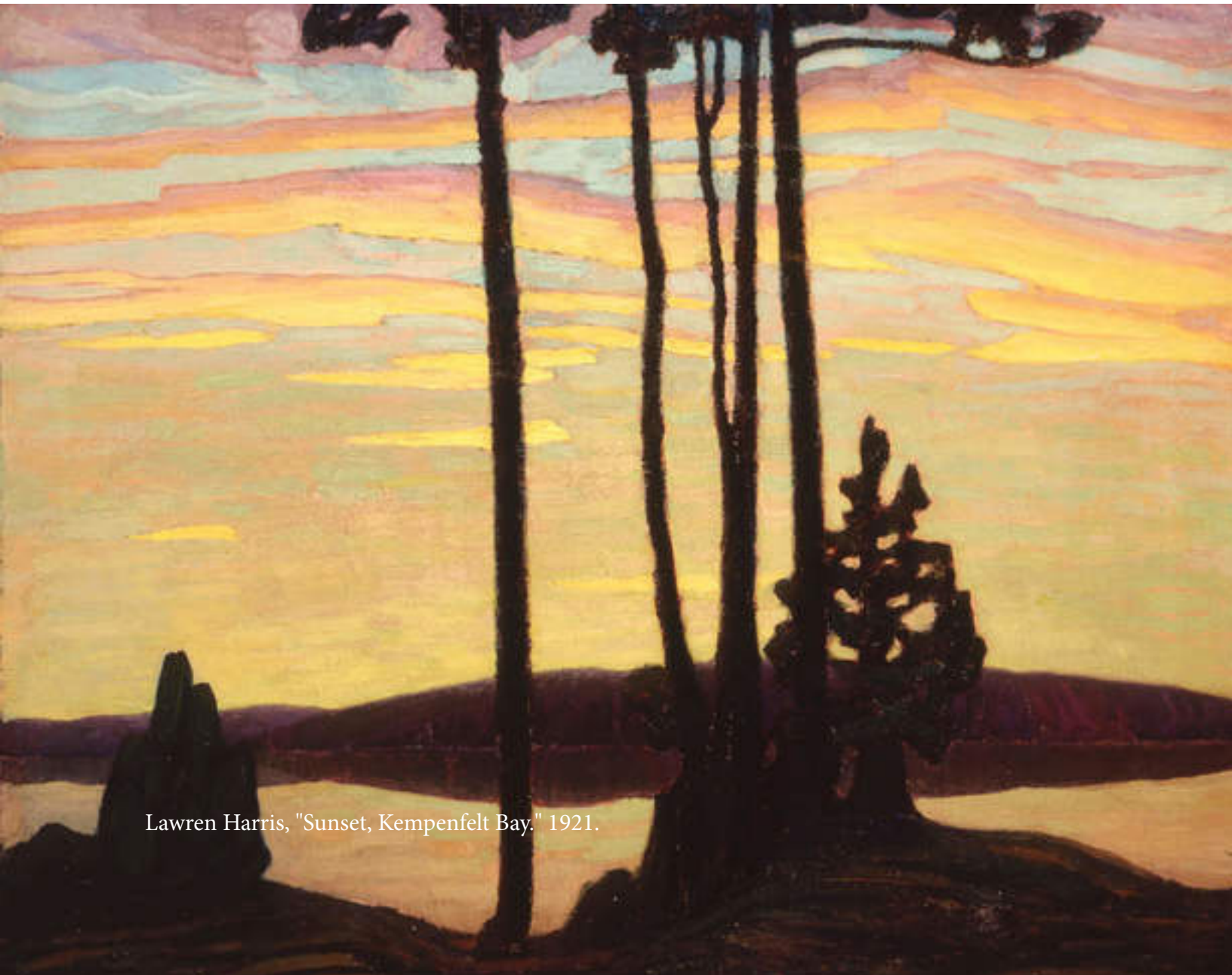


Figure 4: Owen Street and present-day Meridian Place and Memorial Square, before and after the establishment of Heritage Park.  
(Historical image credit: Barrie Archives)



### **The Regional Character**

Barrie is located within a cultural and geological transition between the landscapes of Northern and Southern Ontario, acting as a gateway to each region. This creates a unique dialogue between the materiality and ecology of the deciduous forests, agricultural areas, and glacial till of the south and the dramatic reveal of bedrock to the north. This can be leveraged to inform the landscape design at Heritage Park, one that is of a hybrid nature with an immersive approach to an educational experience about the regional landscape.



Lawren Harris, "Sunset, Kempenfelt Bay," 1921.



Figure 5: Montage of local landscape textures.

**Drawing from the regional landscape character will set the tone for an immersive and enduring park experience, which will honour Barrie's post-glacial geomorphic inheritance.**

## **2.2 A Centrally-located Park on the Bay**

Heritage Park is a 2.9 hectare park on the shore of Kempenfelt Bay, located immediately south of Simcoe Street, between Bayfield Street and Mulcaster Street. Heritage Park is one component of the 10km waterfront network of parks, trails, and amenities.

Heritage Park is intrinsically tied to the broader waterfront park amenities. It has filled a unique role as a destination park for passive use while being the site of many organized public events throughout the year. Its central location is an integral part of its determination as an important city-wide amenity, requiring a high level of interrogation that is necessary to determine the needs of a vibrant and growing place.

### **Trail Connections**

Heritage Park is a primary hub for both local and county-wide trail systems. The walkway and cycle path bordering Heritage Park link the Park to most of Barrie's trails systems. The Trans Canada Trail is a significant arterial connection that unites north and south Barrie for pedestrians and cyclists. The trail runs along part of the northern border of Heritage Park along Simcoe Street then becomes redirected north through Meridian Place. The Nine Mile Portage Trail begins at Meridan Place, across Simcoe Street from the Park.

The Waterfront Heritage Trail crosses the north boundary of the Park, and the two Heritage Trail Stations (9 and 10) occur within the Park along this trail. The North Shore Trail, which also hosts the Waterfront Heritage Trail, begins at Heritage Park, then continues to the east from Heritage Park. It is a busy path that supports walking, cycling, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing.

The Simcoe County Loop Trail follows Heritage Park's northern border (the walkway and bikeway) east to link to the North Shore Trail, continuing onto Orillia. The Martyr's Shrine Pilgrim Route begins at Heritage Park, ending at the Martyr's Shrine in Midland.

### **Downtown Connections**

Downtown Barrie will continue to be a place of intensification through development, in terms of population, building type, and commercial enterprise, as mandated by the provincial Places to Grow Act. It is deemed an Urban Growth Centre that will see population growth downtown, inevitably creating an urban environment with more diversity in those who reside there in terms of cultural background, age, and ability.

As downtown population grows over the coming years, ensuring choice in arriving to the Park by means of active transportation and legible pedestrian connections will continue to be important. Looking at Heritage Park through a lens of connectivity helps in determining its functionality in terms of accessibility and universal design, ease of access to water amenities, the scale and servicing of event spaces, passive and formalized ways to gather with others, and a diversity in choice of seating for rest and views.



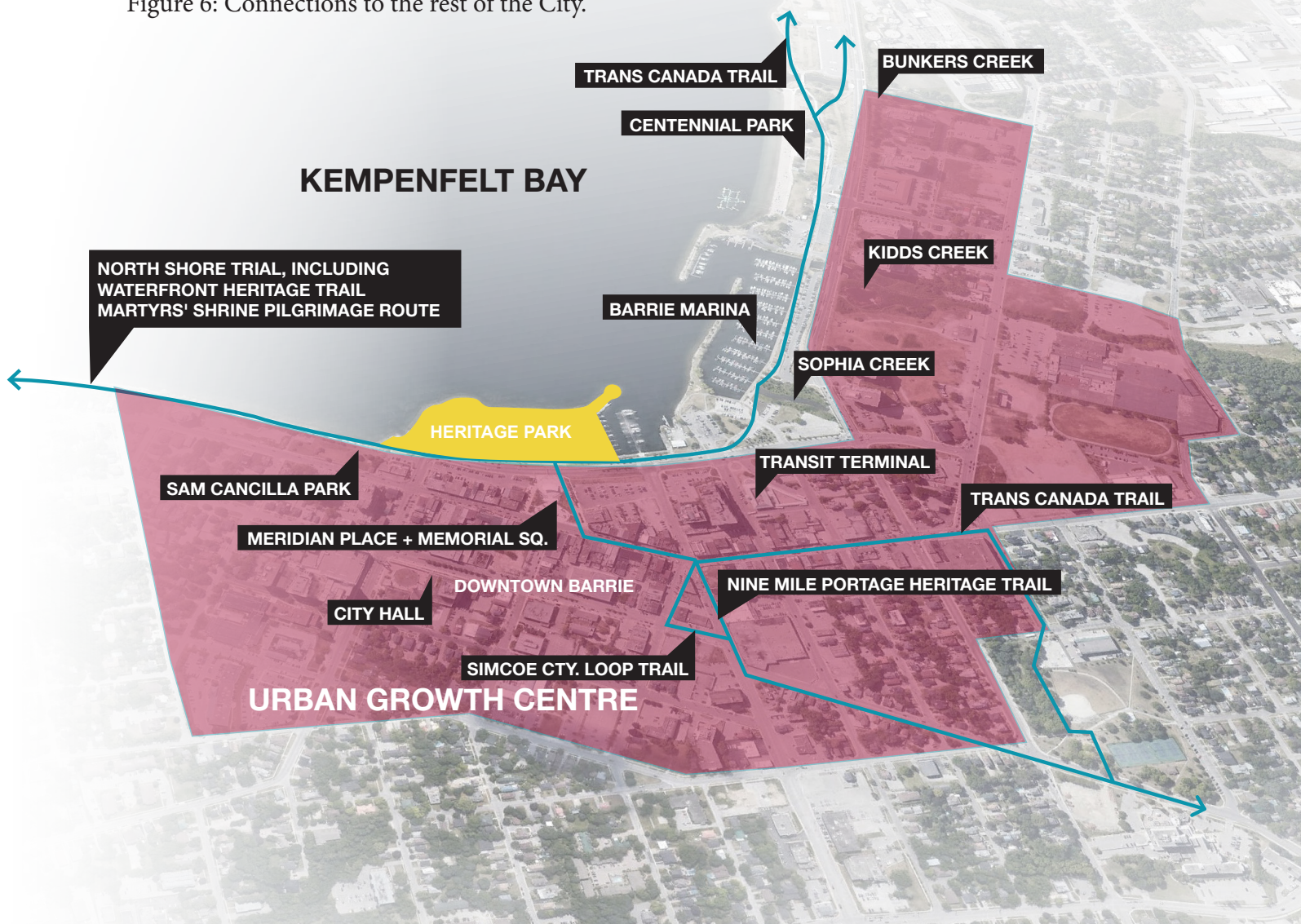


**Heritage Park draws people to the shoreline and is a stop in the existing trail network. How can the Park further encourage the use of active transportation and meet the recreational needs of Barrie?**



How can the connections through pedestrian infrastructure, event spaces, views, and materiality create a park that is an attraction within a cohesive whole of waterfront and downtown amenities?

Figure 6: Connections to the rest of the City.



## **2.3 Existing Amenities + Programming**

### **Summary of Existing Amenities and Programming**

Heritage Park has accumulated many significant elements throughout its 30 year history. It has popular water features in the human-made stream, the pond (ice rink during Winter), the splash pad, and the 'Spit,' separating Kempenfelt Bay from the marina. The Sea Serpent, a kinetic sculpture at a headland, overlooking the Bay, is a popular focal point. The views out to Kempenfelt Bay are spectacular in all seasons, however views are unfocused and do not provide easily accessed options for resting or gathering. Large lawns accommodate many of the cultural events that happen at the Park, but need to be better equipped or better shared with paved areas for future use.

There is a lack of shade, as we had heard during the first PIC. A small gazebo is thoughtfully located adjacent to the pond, however it lacks points of egress, is near the end of its acceptable period of use — aesthetically and functionally, and the scale is too small to accommodate the level of visitors and events that now take place here. Few trees in the park are grouped and are not clustered enough to create the amount of shade necessary for the comfort of park visitors.

The planting and gardening layout, done in an English garden country motif, is pleasant but is missing important points of access for all (gardens are often islands in lawn) and does not suggest four season enjoyment. There is currently a deficit in planting as an ecological support. Any rethinking of park programming should include planting to augment ecological processes, as a complimentary provision of habitat and food for local animal and insect species. Experiential (seasonality, mental restoration) and educational opportunities can be leveraged from an ecological approach to planting.

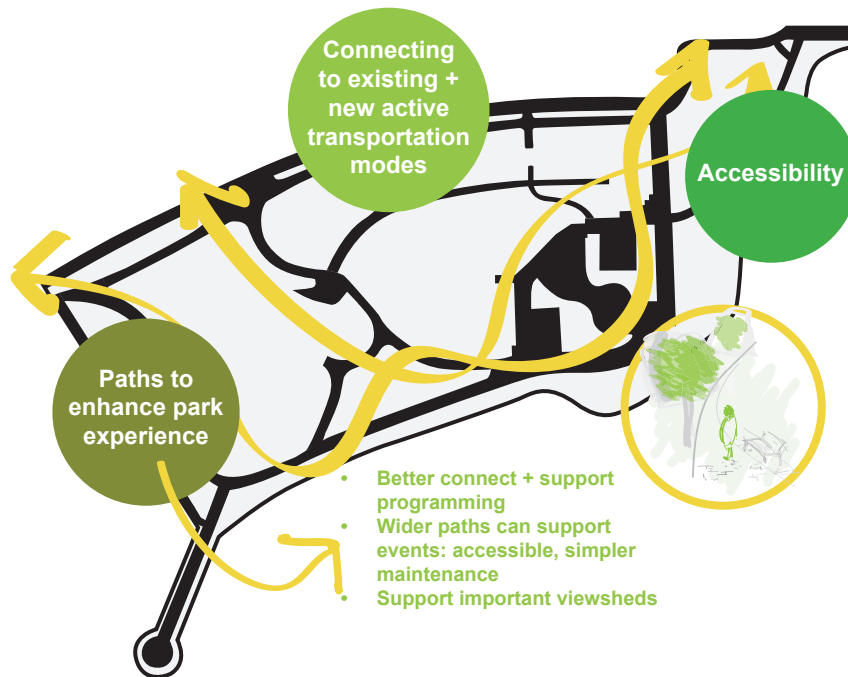
There is currently parking for those arriving by vehicle, including charging stations and accessible parking stalls. Covered parking for bicycles and storage for personal watercraft should be considered to better support alternative transportation modes.

There is currently undersized entries to the Park, especially considering the connection to Meridian Place. Heritage Park needs to be in better communication with Meridian Place, as shared spaces of pedestrian-oriented infrastructure and event hosting spaces. A more seamless visual and physical connection, while supporting individual park character, would nurture an urban passive and spontaneous-program space.

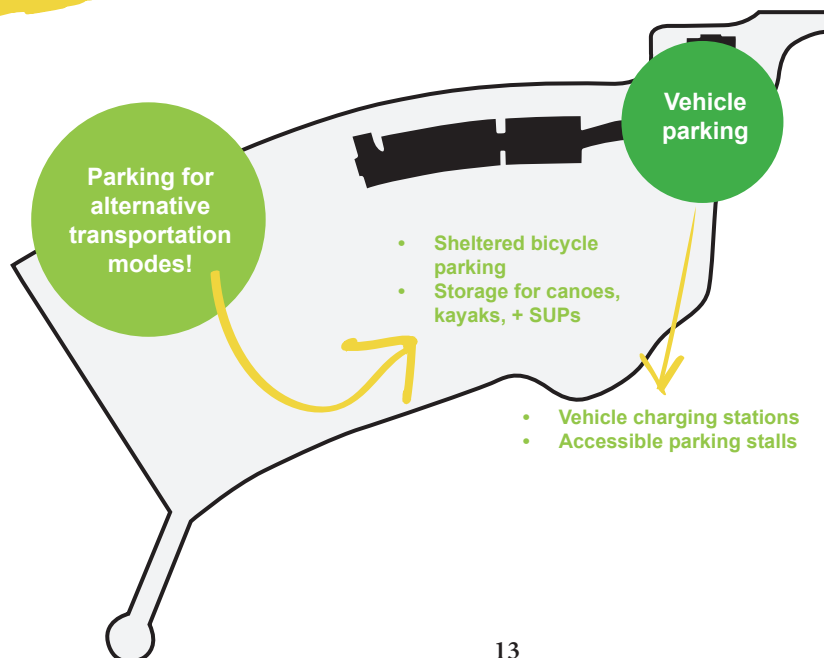


## 2.4 Existing Amenities + Programming. A Visual Synthesis of Possibilities

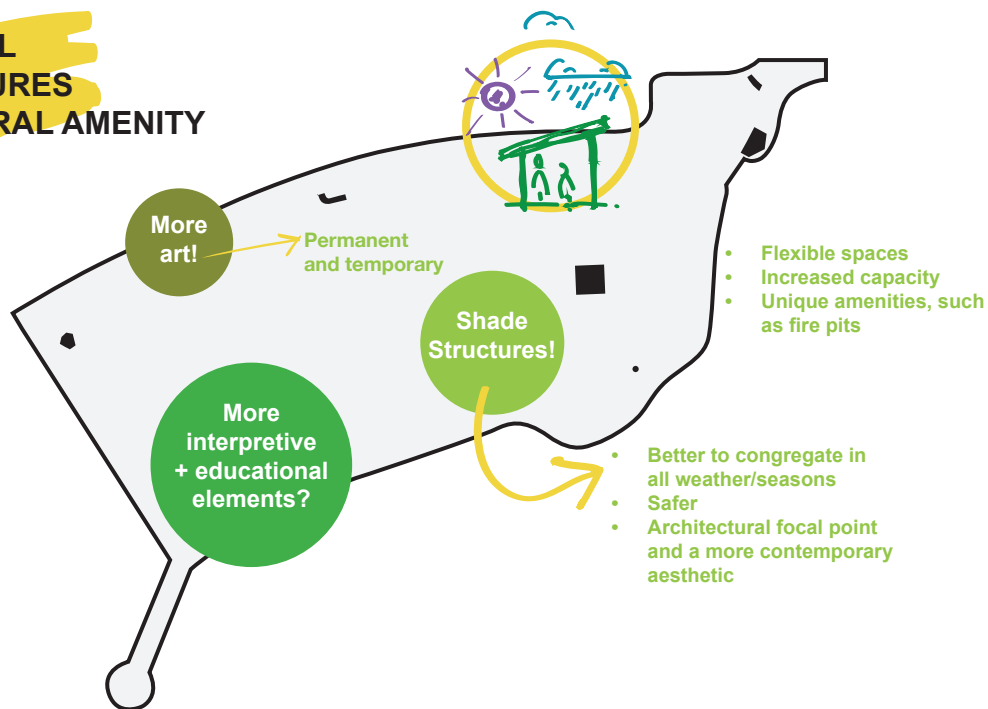
### CIRCULATION + PLAZAS



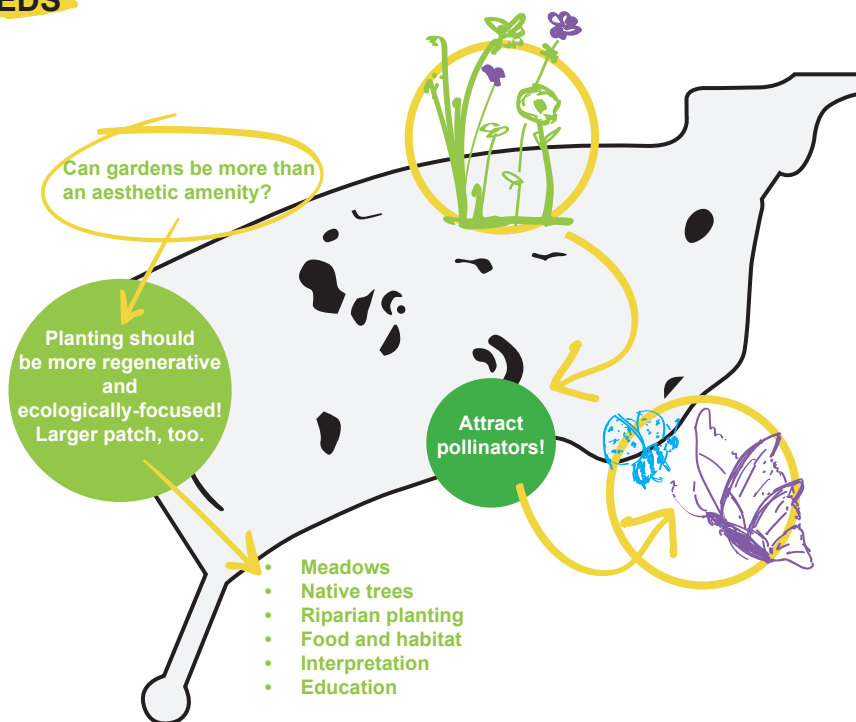
### PARKING



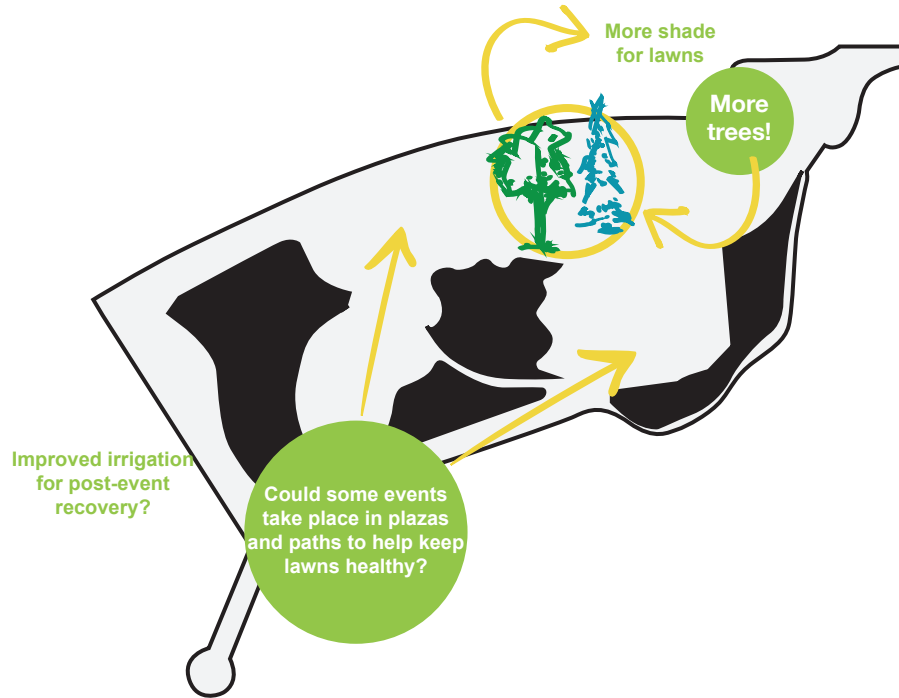
## PHYSICAL STRUCTURES + CULTURAL AMENITY



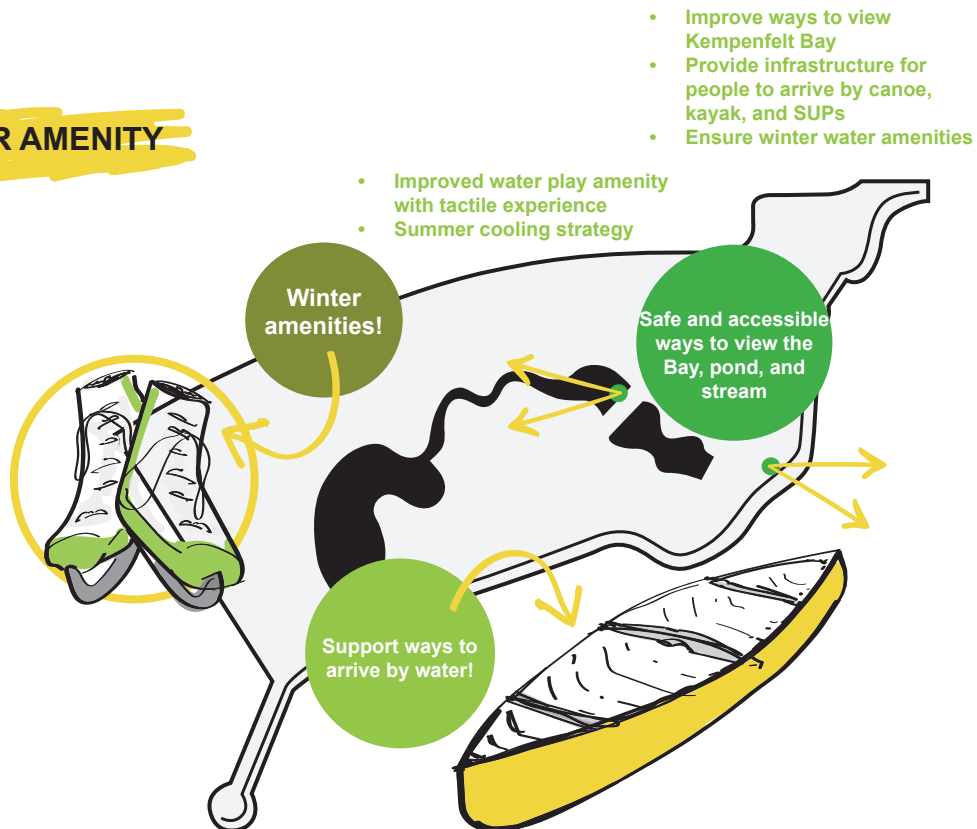
## GARDEN BEDS



## OPEN LAWN



## WATER AMENITY



## **2.5 Current Events Programming**

Heritage Park supports daily passive use, while also playing host (sometimes jointly with Meridian Place, the trail networks, or adjacent city streets) to more than 25 events a year, in all seasons, attracting anywhere from 100 to 50,000 people.

One of the challenges with Heritage Park is to choreograph the sometimes competing goals of planned events and daily passive uses – to smooth anticipated conflict, when possible. Planning the dimensions of the spaces, along with the programming that may take place there, will be a way to manage the expectations of visitors to the Heritage Park, reducing the likelihood of conflict between uses.

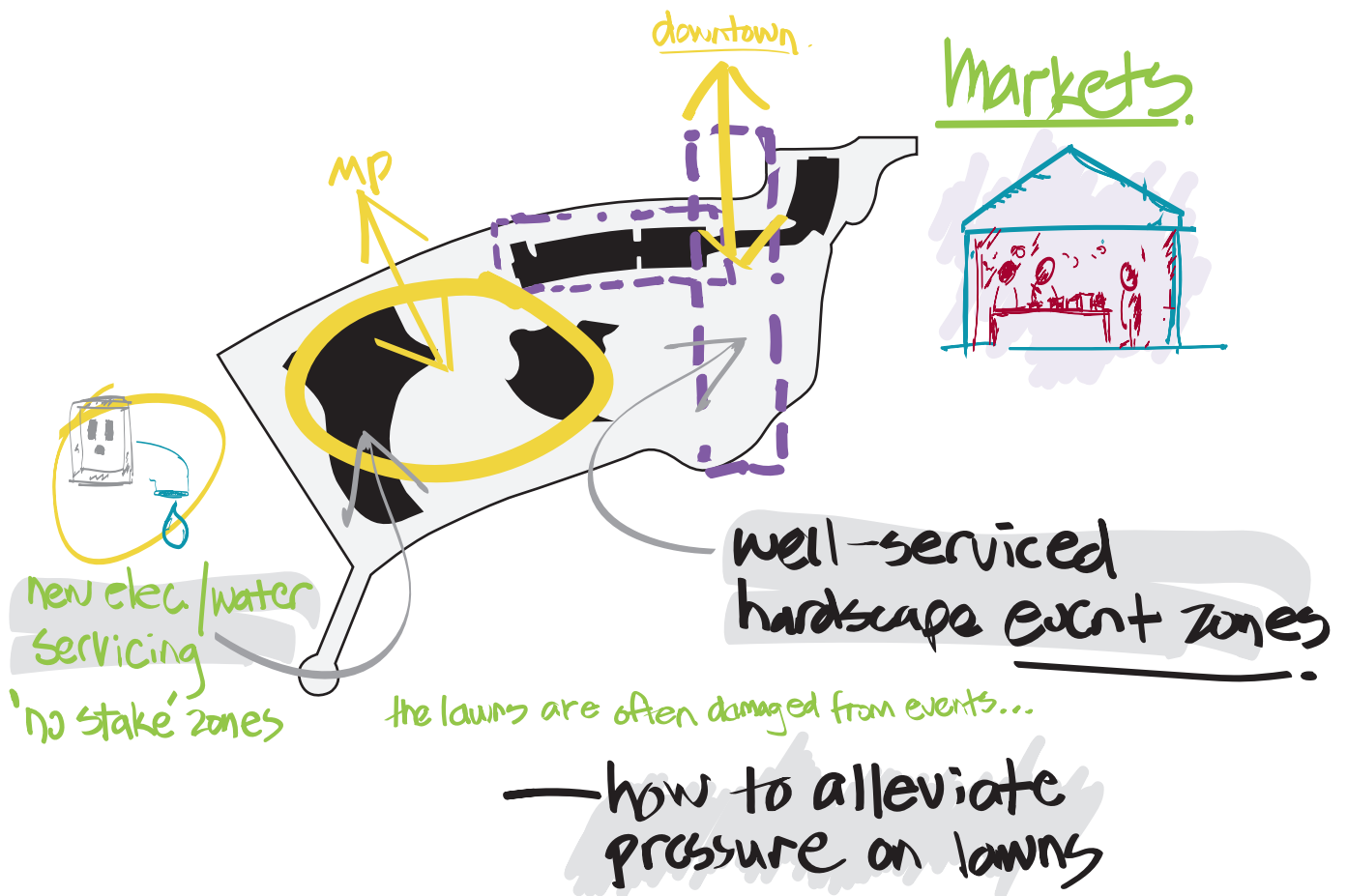
It has been communicated that large public events at Heritage Park often damage the lawns with vehicular and foot traffic. Seeking balance between the passive and event uses is key to successfully maintain park spaces. Providing a diversity of spaces, possibly with the inclusion of landscaped paths wide enough to accommodate events, could help with allowing the turfgrass to rehabilitate.

The supporting services, such as electrical, water, and audio/visual connections are at the end of their life-cycle or inadequate for current and future uses. This should be addressed to meet the needs of park programming.

**How can Heritage Park plan for large-scale events and daily passive use in a way that brings success and sustainability to both?**

#### What we heard!

- Connect better to downtown and Meridian Place
- Update servicing
- Add event-appropriate spaces
- Audio/visual support
- Year-round washroom access
- Flexible spaces to accommodate a range of scale of events
- Start-ups, incubator spaces, kiosks
- Ease of event set-up



## **2.6 Public Information Centres**

Two Public Information Centres (PICs) were held during the Master Plan process. SHIFT Landscape Architecture, in coordination with the City of Barrie, hosted the first Public Information Centre (PIC) over two sessions to provide information on the initial three proposed design concepts for Heritage Park. This was the first opportunity for the general public to review the direction of the design concepts and master plan concerns, including the project objectives, site background, precedents, and three design concepts. The second PIC was held over two sessions, as well, and confirmed the direction of the project to that point.

### **PIC 1**

The PIC took place from 2:00pm to 4:00pm and from 6:00pm to 8:00pm on May 27, 2021. The PICs were hosted online using the Zoom webinar tool. The PIC had **32 unique viewer emails** (people signing in as participants) and **27 unique viewer emails** to the 2:00pm-4:00pm and 6:00pm-8:00pm sessions, respectively. Following the PIC, a survey was posted on the Building Barrie website, along with presentation information to collect feedback and provide information about the design concepts, from May 27 to June 14. The website had **633 visits** and **197 downloads** of the proposed concepts, **226 survey responses** were completed. In addition to the survey responses **7 email responses** were received, plus **21 documented comments** were received from participants of the PICs (10 and 11 comments for each session, respectively.) Following the PICs and comment period, SHIFT collected and reviewed the comments received in all formats. A report of the results from PIC 1 can be found in Appendix 2.

The three design concepts were presented in a graduated approach, meaning there were three levels of intervention and investment, with consistent basic ideas across all three. The common threads introduced to all concepts were a reconsideration of the circulation network (paths) to better accommodate programming, and accessibility, while drawing on the regional landscape for design inspiration to make more legible the idea of “place.” The three concepts, from lowest level of investment to highest, were “Refresh,” “Rehab,” and “Rethink” (see: Appendix 1).

The approach of using graduated concepts provided a framework for engaging participants in discussion on the value they apply to the existing and potential activities (and the supporting elements) shown in the presentation material.

For consideration in the development of the Master Plan and Concept Design into the next phase, the main takeaways were:

- More and better access to water is desired. It was communicated that there is a strong desire to create safe and easy ways to view and physically access Kempenfelt Bay, with continued access to the benefits of water through a water feature. Integration of active transportation modes can be leveraged by water access, as well.



**Heritage Park provides a fundamental association to Kempenfelt Bay. How do we make this connection broader, in terms of ease of access and multi-season use?**



- The environmental health of the park was a recurring theme, indicating it is a critical aspect of the future direction, including the ecological health of the waterfront, the introduction of pollinator gardens, large shade trees, and climate change adaptation strategies.
- A safe and accessible park was important to many attendees. Generous sightlines, well-lit spaces, and porous spaces (entrance/egress) should be created. Paths, lookouts, seating, and special site features should all offer ease of use through universal design standards and AODA.

It became clear after the first phase of PICs that there was a desire from most to strive for a thoughtfully designed, high quality park which will fulfill the needs of the city across a wide range of programmatic and experiential opportunities. To inform the next phase of master plan development before the next PIC this feedback was considered through the lens of a few measurable confirmations and changes, including ensuring the use of high quality materials that better reflect the region, the introduction of a broad range of seating and ways to gather, the formalization of a well-structured and accessible path system, and highlighting the cultural and ecological importance of water to the residents of Barrie.

## PIC 2

The City of Barrie and SHIFT Landscape Architecture hosted two sessions of a Public Information Centre (PIC) on November 25, 2021. The PIC consisted of the presentation of the draft Master Plan and Concept Design followed by an open discussion.

Presentation materials were posted on the Building Barrie website on November 9, along with a survey. The survey was intended to gain feedback on any outstanding items that may have been overlooked during the process to this point, but more importantly it was designed to engage the community and determine that the draft Master Plan responded to the outcomes of the first PIC. There were 987 visits to the site in total, 579 document downloads, and 123 survey responses. In addition to the survey five people contributed by email.

Overall, the survey responses confirmed the direction of the Master Plan from the first PIC to the second, with a strong number of responses in the affirmative for all questions.

Generally, the main takeaways from PIC 2 confirmed the desires that were communicated by participants during PIC 1. Park visitors desire improved access to water, more shade and biodiversity, and to accommodate both programmed events and passive gathering.

The survey determined that participants would like to see additions like improved accessibility, continuing to accommodate cultural events, new ways to interact with natural elements, and improving the ability to arrive via alternative modes of transportation. These additions are important to the development of the park in the future and respondents agreed that the Master Plan was featuring these improvements.

Respondents also continued to support lawns for picnicking/gathering informally, the



introduction of biodiverse areas for bird and insect habitat, the addition of more shade, and more spaces for public art.

A question was posed on the functionality of the washrooms at Heritage Park and respondents would like to see change rooms, change tables, improved accessibility (AODA and hours of opening), family washrooms, and touchless fixtures.

In terms of park programming, participants would like to continue to see music and food events, as well as more Indigenous programming. The concept design ensures there are improved spaces for these events and activities.

For a full summary of the results of Public Information Centre 2, see Appendix 3.

## **2.7 Stakeholder Consultation Outreach**

To ensure a comprehensive overview of existing conditions discussion with Technical Stakeholders (Water Operations, Wastewater, Corporate Facilities, Marina, Engineering, Parks Maintenance) on February 9, 2021 and Key Stakeholders (Economic and Creative Development, Culture and Events, Recreation, Marina and Waterfront Facilities, Park, Forestry and Horticulture, Development Services) on February 12, 2021 took place. On March 10, 2021 a meeting with the Accessibility Committee took place. Two meetings with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority took place on April 23, 2021 and August 4, 2021.

A number of relevant issues were raised and prompted further investigation for inclusion in the Master Plan. A Discussion Log was developed and updated as new information came to light to record the needs of stakeholders in detail in relation to function and program.

For consideration in the development of the master plan and concept, the main takeaways are:

- The electrical and water service that is relied on for events is at the end of its useful life. In addition to this, there is now an opportunity to layout and provide a level of service that meets the needs of the particular events that take place at Heritage Park. Washroom and water feature equipment and infrastructure is maintenance heavy and ill-suited for contemporary needs, as well. The washroom facility does not meet current accessibility standards or needs.
- Mobility and accessibility to and around the park should be addressed. This includes active transportation, accessible parking spaces (location, amount), ease of use of the paths and bridges for every age of visitor, and accommodating safe ways to view Kempenfelt Bay and enjoy the water-based amenities. Launch areas for personal watercraft (canoe, kayak, SUP) would increase the possibility of arriving to the park via other means than car. Attention to the circulation and parking needs of maintenance and tractor-trailer delivery vehicles must also be included.
- Heritage Park is the site of many events and a destination for passive use year-round. There is a desire to better equip the park for planned events, with the designation of flexible-use spaces and event zones. Passive and spontaneous use (walking, cycling, gathering) needs to be accounted for as well with the inclusion of diverse spaces with options for seating and gathering. There are particular opportunities at the water feature and water's edge to create spaces that maximize functionality and accommodate the most amount of visitors across age ranges. Lighting for safety, accessibility, and place-making is to be considered. Permanent and temporary art needs to be considered for location in the Park.
- New approaches to planting at Heritage Park needs to be considered, incorporating ecological function and interpretation. The existing plant beds are mostly seasonal and ornamental, however a new planting scheme should be an attraction and provide interest throughout

the seasons throughout the Park, including along the shoreline. Approaches to site planning and design that integrate Park programming (passive and active), habitat and ecological restoration, and visitor engagement need to be utilized.

**What we heard: Park servicing is at the end of its life cycle and new programming needs have arisen in a growing and diverse city. Climate change, accessibility, and experiencing the qualities of natural elements are new concerns for park users.**

## 3.0 Strategizing for the Future

### 3.1 Mapping a Strategy



Figure 7: Concept graphic showing influences of the Master Plan.

## **3.2 Mission + Vision**

### **Mission**

Heritage Park will be an important public space hub and point of connection between downtown Barrie and the waterfront. It will play a vital role in the passive activities that take place on Barrie's waterfront, while playing host to the events that are important to the identity of Barrie. Heritage Park shall be an inclusive and welcoming space, allowing visitors to enjoy the natural beauty of Kempenfelt Bay and the natural scenery that the park has to offer.

### **Vision**

Heritage Park has location. It will be the keystone that locks together a ribbon of waterfront parks, downtown Barrie, and Kempenfelt Bay. Its location will give anyone visiting the park a glimpse of Barrie's identity as a city.

Rethinking the park's design presents an opportunity to augment the identifying qualities of the region to entice a sense of wonder and memorability for those who visit. The Heritage Park Master Plan leverages this through the creation of a strong underlying conceptual framework that ties in flexible programmatic functionality, contemporary landscape and architectural forms, social and ecological supports, and facilitating a visceral connection to water.

At the very base of the design concept is the idea of connection — to land, to water, to people. The master plan concept will reinforce the notion of the park as a passive and event-driven gathering area, bringing people to the waterfront from all over the region. Heritage Park will continue to be a stopping place and destination along the waterfront trail system, while drawing people from the downtown looking for respite. Natural materials, through a native planting scheme and nods to the regional geology, will inspire a connection to place, that you are here, and here is Barrie.

The vision for Heritage Park showcases an idea of a regenerative urban green oasis. The concept takes cues from the scenography of the existing picturesque landscape, while overlaying contemporary notions of form, function, and ecological systems.

### **3.3 A Park of Places, the Key Initiatives**

Heritage Park will be a *park of places*. To support the vision for the Park the following Key Initiatives provide a programmatic and experiential foundation that informs the physical layout of the park.

The initiatives will guide future development at the park, each as a theme, as follows:

- A Four Season Place
- A Delightful Place
- A Natural place
- An Accessible Place
- An Eventful Place
- A Water Place

The initiatives are used as a multi-dimensional approach in support of the Master Plan Concept. Each initiative provides a targeted area, or theme, to drive the future development of programming and amenities. These are often cross-referenced between each initiative, giving considerable weight to many of the proposed elements. In addition to this, the initiatives consolidate feedback from the public and key stakeholders, while considering the prominence of Heritage Park as a location for City programming , passive programming, and its function as an access point to Kempenfelt Bay.

### 3.3.1

## A four season place.

Heritage Park should be an attractive, educational, and accessible place all year round. Planting should offer interest all year. Diverse meadow planting will offer winter interest and shade trees will provide relief during the warmer months. Main paths into the site should continue to be safely managed during winter. Winter events will be accounted for and programming opportunities should be accommodated, while considering winter comfort and 'winter city' strategies.



Barrie has the advantage to be in a location that experiences the change in seasons in a very real and tangible way. The variation in average daily temperatures spans 28°C. Many popular activities and events are close at hand throughout the year, in cold and warm months. 74% of respondents (PIC 2) saw themselves visiting the Park all year. Heritage Park should be a place that demonstrates seasonality, with visitor comfort and park programming leveraging opportunities no matter the season. Seasonal experiences, with the appropriate planning and care, will ensure a lively and energetic urban environment. The design of public spaces should not be beholden to an idealized July day.

### **Recommendations for a Four Season Place**

i) Heritage Park will offer a seasonal experience through planting and gardens and leverage this to diversify visitor experience and offer a passive place-making opportunity.

- Naturalized meadow planting, as shown in the Master Plan Concept, and native trees offer interest all year, as they change with the seasons, through dormancy and falling leaves, to Spring buds and blooms. Seeing the seasonal change in diverse and abundant plant-life offers a passive education in one's locality, grounding experience in place. Feedback from the Public Information Centres (PICs) determined quiet restorative walks and natural elements are reasons many visit or will continue to visit, and seasonality in gardens and trees will offer a diverse experiences for visitors to return to from Summer through Winter.

ii) Heritage Park is popular for large events and passive visiting and will ensure the comfort of park visitors throughout the year.

- Summer in Barrie can be hot and humid. Nice weather draws many to Heritage Park, and many events, including the large Canada Day festivities, take place during peak summer event season. PIC respondent feedback confirmed that a lack of shade during the warmer months is an issue for visitors. As Barrie's highest average sun hours and warmest temperatures coincide, more shade should be added through tree planting and architectural focal points like shade structures. To further combat the heat of the Summer consider water features that mist and areas for designated cooling.
- PIC feedback confirmed much of what brought many visitors to the park are the cultural events, including Winter events like Winterfest. Building connections to Kempenfelt Bay during the Winter and offering sheltered areas for stalls or gathering will allow visitors to more easily seek the benefits of fresh air and natural elements during the colder months.



As it is located on open water Heritage Park is very exposed, however creating shelter against the prevailing winds can offer visitors comfort during the Winter months. There are more overcast days during January and February than other times of the year, so ways to communicate comfort and enjoyment during these months can contribute to a healthy community. A close study of prevailing winds and their effects should be done during detailed design to ensure areas of comfort are considered during colder months. Consider appropriate plant species and the form of plants for shelter and interest during the Winter months.

- Respondent feedback suggested ice skating (PIC 2) and places for Winter picnicking (PIC 1) as ways to program the Park during the months where it may be easier to stay inside due to the cold. A more detailed look at programming is offered in “An Eventful Place,” however in terms of seasonality servicing for events should be considered for Winter months as well.

iii) Heritage Park should be an attractive place to be, all year round.

- Designing for Winter will create an environment that also carries benefits into Summer. Considering some of what is mentioned in the next section (“A Delightful Place”), bringing colour, warmer-to-the-touch furniture materials, sheltering structures, and quality lighting will create a vibrant and attractive public space, while ensuring safety, comfort, and accessibility.
- PIC feedback suggested accessibility, from an AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) perspective, but also ease of movement and programming perspective is desired. Maintaining clear paths during the winter and continuing to offer Winter programming will encourage many residents and tourists to continue to visit the Park throughout the year, including for exercise and other passive programming.

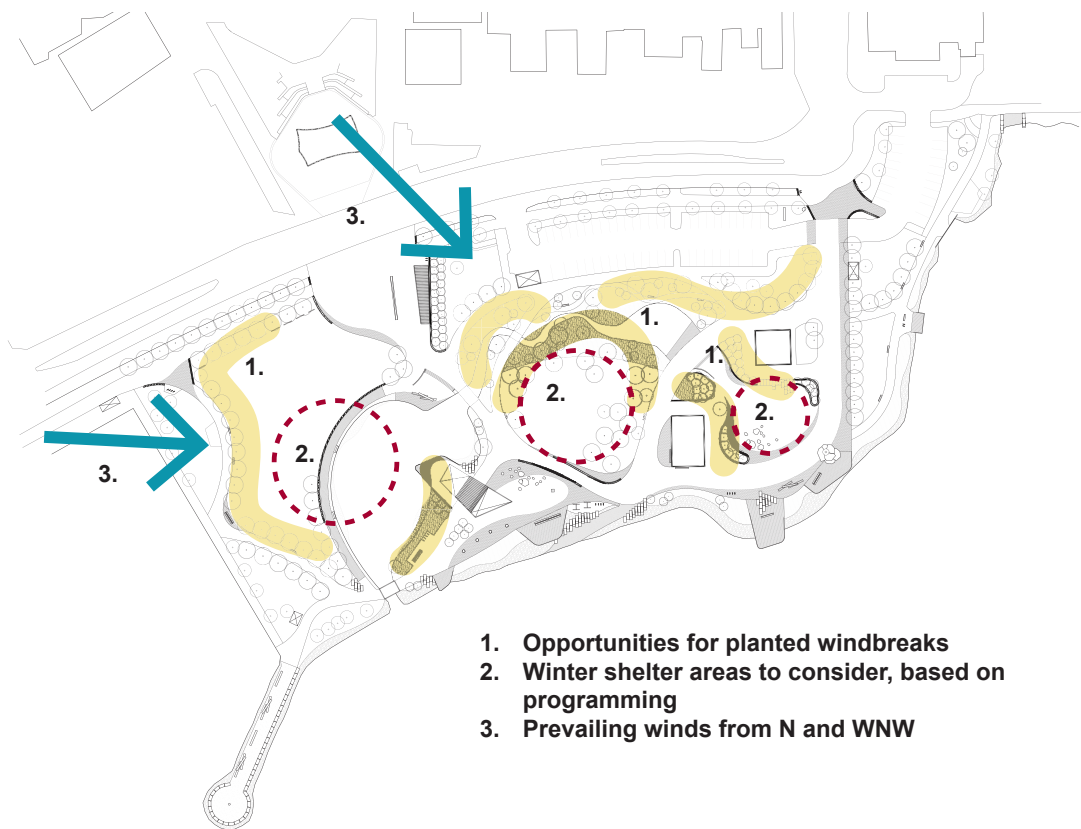
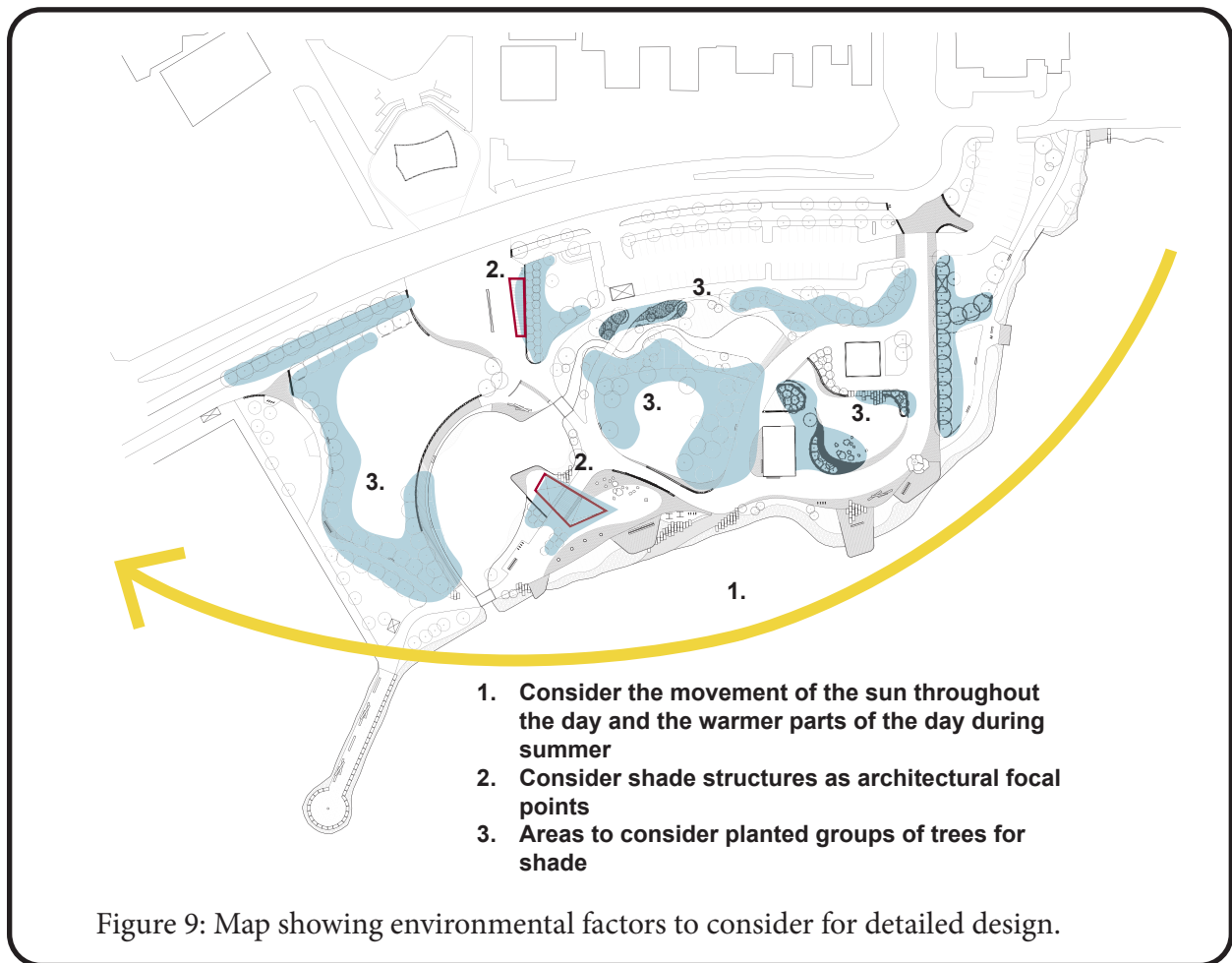


Figure 8: Map showing environmental factors to consider for detailed design.



### 3.3.2

## A delightful place.

Heritage Park should be a desirable and safe place, even after the sun has set. Extending the hours of planned events would be aided by a well-planned lighting scheme. The design of the spaces and elements should provide interest and enhance park experience. Lighting should accentuate the architectural and landscape character of the park, while artistic lighting could be a focal point. Temporary and permanent art and artfully designed spaces should continue to be considered as a positive addition to the urban public realm.



Heritage Park will be one of the primary catalysts for redevelopment in central Barrie and be the example of what urban public space is to be in Barrie, bringing interest, energy, and cultural vitality in an uncompromising way. Art and design, visual objects of human expression, should be articulated from a position of prominence within the Park. In whatever way its layout and elements coalesce, the Park's design should allow for the joys and delights of human experience.

### **Recommendations for a Delightful Place**

- i) Site lighting should be considered beyond its functional measurability, but heighten the experience of visitors.
- Lighting should be thought of in terms of expression and a conveyance of character. Fixtures and their supports should be chosen for elegance, simplicity, sustainability, and with a nod to contemporary interests. A study of a proposed lighting design should ensure its effects bring a new way to experience the park after the sun sets. Unique site textures and materials can serve as a canvas for architectural lighting, while sculptural art can be lighted to enhance its evening interest, light can be the interactive art object itself. Many light fixtures are available with built-in photo-voltaic cells, however these are often designed with less effort directed at light quality. The preferred approach to sustainability in lighting is through the introduction of a centralized array of photo-voltaics (location discussed on next page), allowing for light quality and performance to be considered separately.
- Site lighting should be proposed to ensure the safety and accessibility (AODA) of path and plaza use. Consider the Park's expanded use for gathering, exercise, and events beyond typical daylight hours, especially as downtown Barrie increases in population and its diversity increases. Much like the consideration of seasonality, an appropriate lighting plan will extend the hours of use and attractiveness of Heritage Park. There was considerable positive feedback from PIC 2 respondents that Heritage Park should continue to play host to cultural events, and appropriate lighting will help extend programmable hours.
- Lighting design for detailed design work should be sensitive to a dynamic context. Heritage Park will have a significant increase in habitat and naturalized areas (see: "A Natural Place") and future detailed design work should consider these zones to be appropriately lighted in a way that is not detrimental to the well-being of resident insects, birds, and other animals. Site lighting design should minimize light trespass to heighten visitor awareness, where possible, of the night sky and Kempenfelt Bay. Light pollution, from trespass and glare, has a negative effect on the pedestrian experience, birds, and the natural environment. Subtlety in a lighting scheme can claim superiority over a bright wash of light in many contexts.



ii) Art should be considered as a cultural amenity that is a primary component of a contemporary public space.

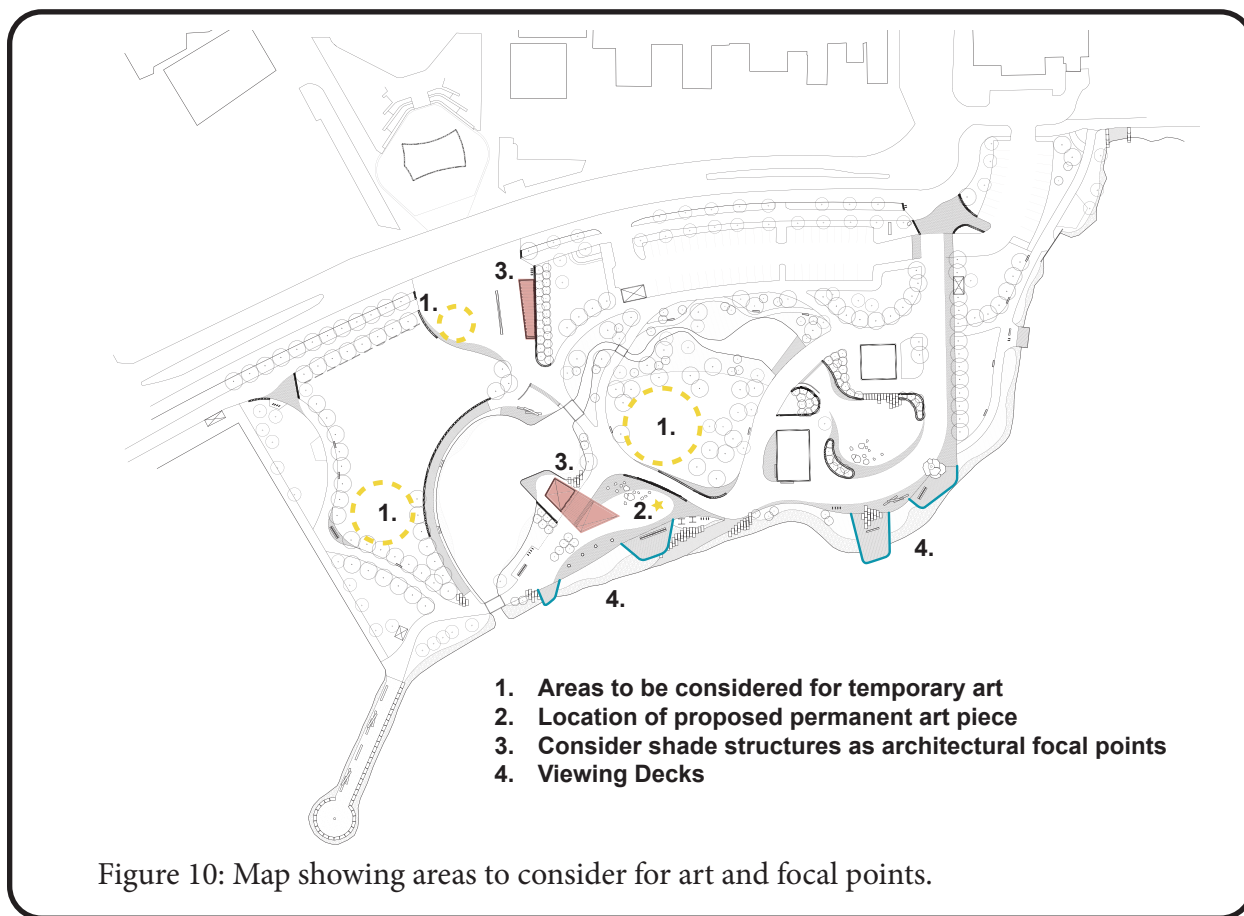
- Strong approval from PIC 2 respondents was confirmed for more spaces for public art. There is an opportunity for Heritage Park to be an open air no-entry-fee-needed cultural experience that can inspire spontaneous response of delight in visitors. It does not need to be populated with art objects, however there are occasions for a permanent piece. The enjoyment an art piece can bring to a public space does not need to be oversold, as evidenced by the Sea Serpent and Dream Catcher sculptures already located on the waterfront. A permanent piece in the Central Plaza (see: Master Plan Concept) would establish a focal point and spatial terminus, a place to meet and gather. Heritage Park could be an outpost of MacLaren Art Centre and grassroots arts organizations who need the space for temporary art pieces or events.
- Art does not need to be a large three dimensional object. It can be subtle. An example of this is the “portage” motif at Meridian Place. It has the same place-making qualities as something more substantial and leveraging this typology of public artfulness can fit well and expeditiously into the design and site work of a plaza, seat wall, or shade structure. Joy and delight can be found in surprising ways, leveraging the qualities of the waterfront and history of the site.

iii) The design of site structures and elements should strive to be elegant and thoughtful in their design and safe and comfortable for visitors to use.

- Two shade structures are proposed for Heritage Park. The intention of the structures are to provide reliable shade and shelter. The structures, with particular focus on the one at the Central Plaza, will be visually and physically permeable to ensure the safety and security of visitors.
- The shade structures should meet pragmatic goals, such as providing shade and shelter, however they should also be landmarks in the park. They should be coordinated with the overall Park aesthetic. Good, properly sited structures will enrich the experience of visitors, helping to reinforce view corridors and places to gather. Shade structures should be thoughtfully designed by a professionally-accredited designer and unique to the space, avoiding overtly commercial or out-of-the-box solutions. They should effectively demonstrate the qualities of their location and a ‘character of place.’ Natural materials, such as wood, should be considered as a building and finishing material, as they will bring a sense of warmth

and recall the landscape character found in the Barrie area. There is an opportunity to use the structures as support for photo-voltaic panels to support site lighting. This will be considered in their structural design.

- Upgrades to existing pump house and washroom buildings should be considered to integrate the building into the overall Park design. This will include refinishing or replacing cladding and renovation of rooflines.
- Site furniture, including seat walls, benches, signs, and light poles should be chosen or designed for consistency and durability, while being thoughtfully integrated into the landscape design. The use of materials, such as wood, would provide a sense of warmth in the cooler months, benefiting the comfort of park visitors. Consideration of materials that age with a patina (as opposed to materials that have a low tolerance for decay from exposure) are encouraged for their durability and place-making qualities.
- The Viewing Decks are a significant proposed addition to Heritage Park and were respondents' favourite proposed addition in the Master Plan Concept (PIC 2). As such, consideration for aesthetics, as well as function, is important. The Viewing Decks will provide a safe and accessible (AODA) way to experience Kempenfelt Bay, offering a panoramic overlook of the water. High quality contemporary design details in form and materials will elevate experience and bring energy to the water's edge, becoming a destination on their own. Consideration for shoreline ecology impacts are essential in the construction of the View Decks (see: "A Natural Place"). There will need to be discussions with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) to determine permits and regulations with reference to shoreline development, considering ecology (see: "A Natural Place"), erosion, and ice piling.



### 3.3.3

## A natural place.

Heritage Park should be a restorative place, somewhere that provides solace in natural elements for visitors. Perennial gardens (native and/or urban-tolerant species) will support a heightened multi-sensory visitor experience informed by species present in the regional landscape, while building capacity to respond to a changing climate. The planting plan should have ecological function, nurturing the well-being of birds and insects, and a maintenance plan that supports this.



There is a big opportunity to leverage Heritage Park's location to create functional ecological performance in an urban environment. Heritage Park can be a proving ground, showcasing contemporary approaches to public space design, meshing urban social performance with biodiversity and habitat creation. With the introduction of naturalized planting and native tree species the benefits of expanding natural elements will spill over into community health and well-being. Choosing to engage with and utilizing the given elements of nature will amplify many of the strategies within the other Key Initiatives, making nature accessible all year and creating an attractive public space. The importance of gardens, shade, and the Park's performance in climate change adaptability were all overwhelmingly confirmed in PIC 1.

### **Recommendations for a Natural Place**

i) Heritage Park should be a place that demonstrates the benefits of maintaining ecological processes in urban public spaces.

- As noted in the Master Plan Concept, there is a zone of naturalized planting proposed in the heart of the site. This area should be primarily meadow, with sparsely planted shrubs and trees for birds to perch and roost, keeping most of it open to the sun to ensure a diverse and thriving garden. Native species are to be striven for, however urban-tolerant plants that meet ecological criteria and are not invasive may be used to ensure success. Seasonality is an assured characteristic in naturalized planting and is to be leveraged for its passive education and place-making effects (see: "A Four Season Place").
- A matrix of mixed meadow planting will support a diverse range of species, including migratory songbirds, waterfowl, insects, aquatic animals, and fish. Where feasible habitat enhancements may be included to attract certain species. Some of the species to think about during detailed design are butterflies, moths, dragonflies, bees, wasps, beetles, ducks, chipmunk, bats, and cottontails. It is recommended that there are opportunities to liaise with the LSRCA during detailed design to set indicator species objectives. Bees and butterflies are important species to attract and can pair with habitat structures and interpretation, showcasing their importance to an urban environment.
- An advantageous consequence of creating bio-diverse spaces is that they, with the proper supports, are spaces with restorative qualities for visitors. Respondents in PIC 2 confirm quiet, contemplative spaces are something to be desired in the Park. As this seems in opposition to the busy programming that takes places in Heritage Park, it only further demonstrates its multi-use importance to the community. Many proposed areas in the Park have multiple



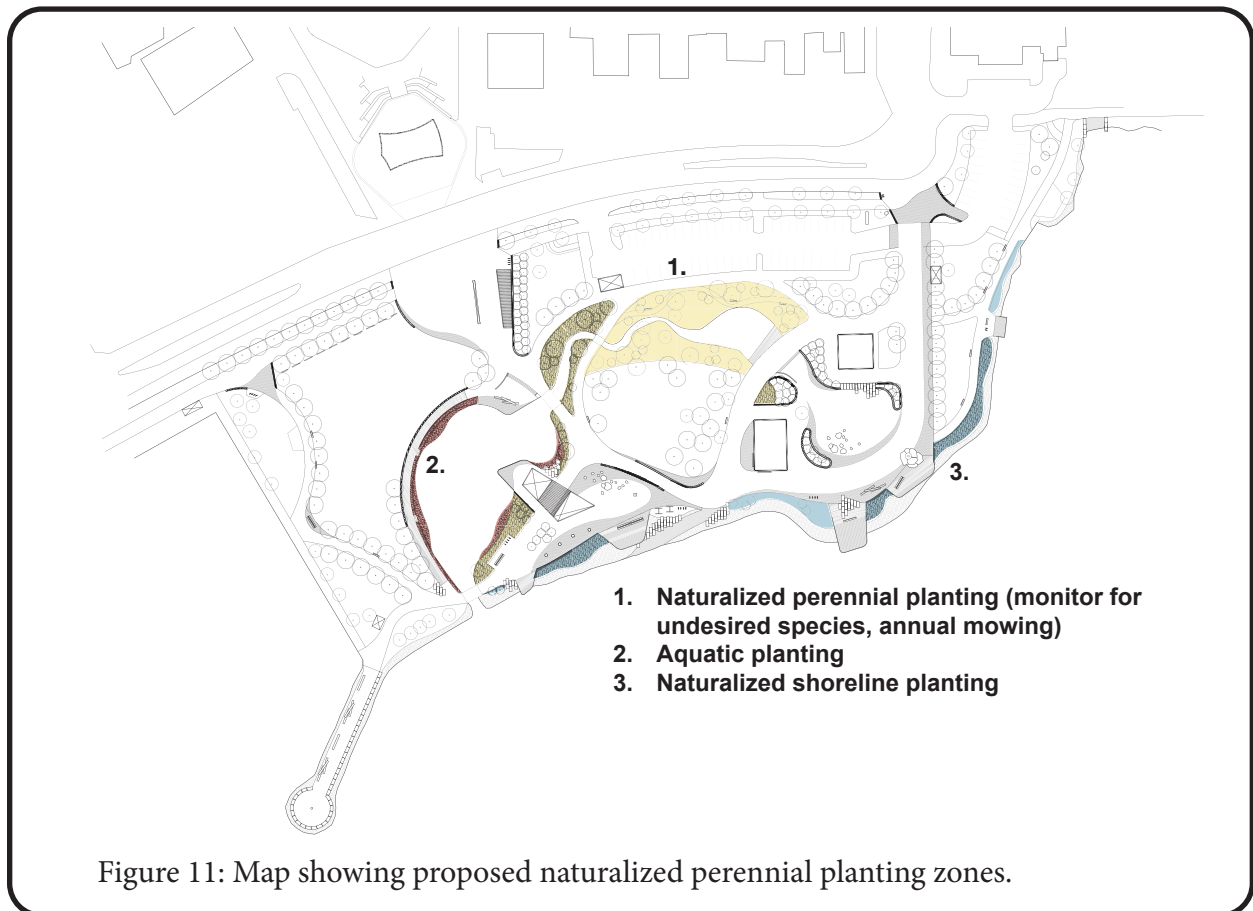
opportunities for active and passive programming (see: “An Eventful Space”) and this is no different. Introducing natural elements and processes to Heritage Park will increase available areas for respite, quiet, and passive ecological education. Active education in the form of interpretive elements may be considered, as well. Ensure educational opportunities are interesting or interactive, while being thoughtfully embedded in the greater design.

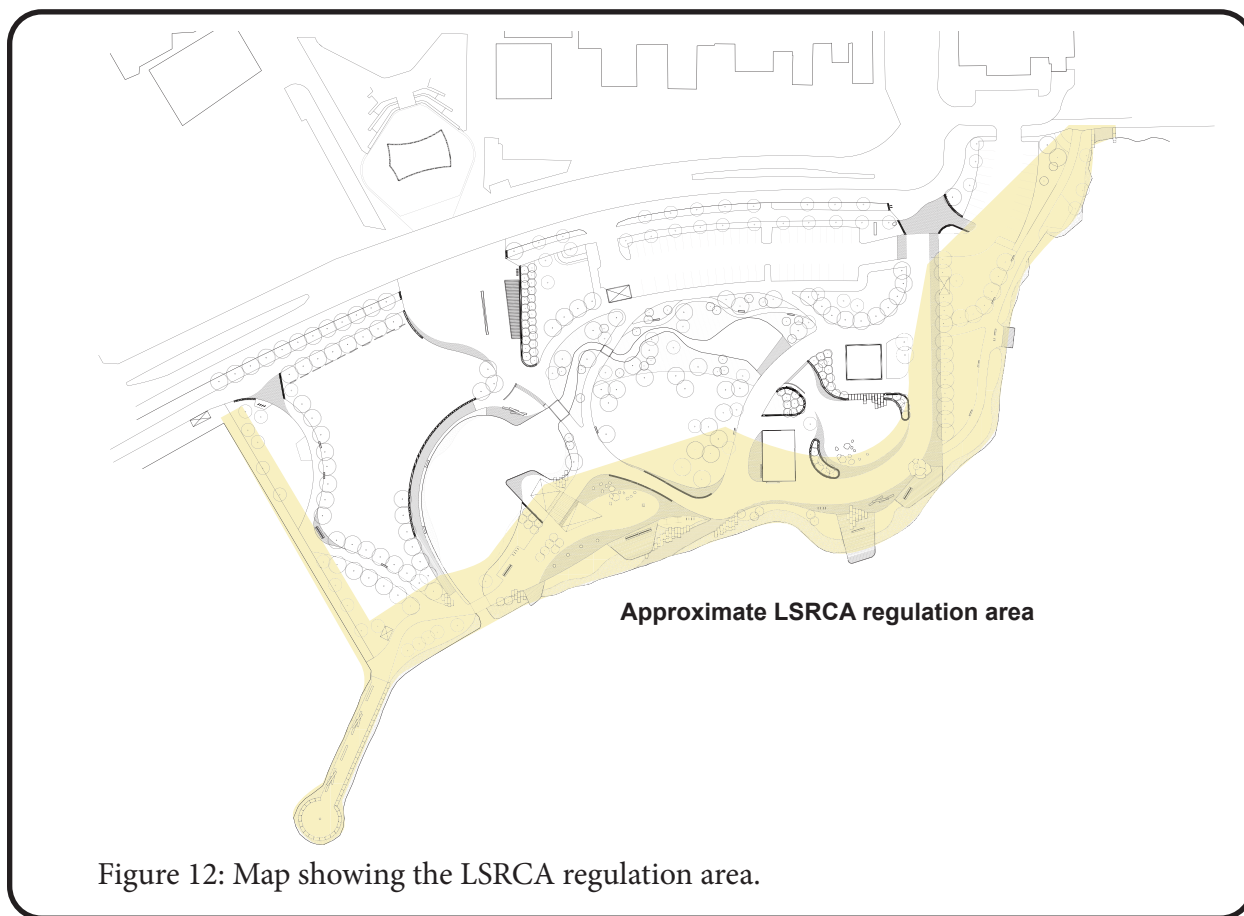
- Shoreline and shoreline-adjacent planting (re: Kempenfelt Bay shoreline) is regulated by the LSRC. There are opportunities to re-energize the shoreline with native species by greening the edge and balancing any incidental developmental impacts. Considerations for detailed design include: the possibility of fish habitat under the Viewing Decks, integrating native species within the armoured shoreline, and investigating opportunities to have vegetation overhang the water. Desired view corridors, water accessibility, and maintaining an armoured edge requires thoughtful integration with proposed shoreline planting.
- Planting zones and trees should be considered integral to park environmental resiliency, especially in preparation for climate change. With some increase in hardscaped areas proposed, a diversity of planting and shade are critical to help reduce the urban heat island effect and create spaces that are comfortable in the summer heat. Naturalized planting areas will assist in storm water runoff absorption and filtering, as rain events are expected to intensify.

ii) A unique approach to maintenance, care, and visitor perception for the naturalized planting zones is required for Heritage Park.

- Perennial planting at Heritage Park will demand a shift in focus from Horticultural Operations. Rewilding planting areas should be inspected weekly for invasive and unwanted plants. Any found should be promptly removed. These areas should be mown in the early Spring to encourage new growth. Leaving them during the Winter will enhance seasonal experience and passive ecological education, while allowing insect habitats to remain. Considerations of safety, accessibility, and ecological processes should be taken into account during maintenance visits.
- Naturalized planting will have the appearance of being more ‘wild,’ however the areas are closely curated for maintenance and performance. Irrigation will be required for these areas to ensure the health of plants is maintained through periods of drought.
- Visitor perception should be considered for design and maintenance of the naturalized

planting areas. These areas may appear more ‘wild’ than many visitors may be used to seeing in an urban park. Structural planting and mass planting in specifically defined areas will help visitors perceive these zones as cared for and ‘designed,’ without having negative affects on ecological services. A tidy edge to adjacent paths and lawn should be maintained for similar reasons. This may include it being regularly ‘edged,’ cut back, or mown (along paths) to increase the perception of a tended-to landscape.





### **3.3.4**

## **An accessible place.**

Heritage Park visitors should find a seamless and uninterrupted experience of the park, no matter their age, ability, or cultural background. Permanent and temporary cultural programming should be welcoming to all. AODA compliance is a binding requirement, however thinking beyond this to universal design, Heritage Park should be easy to navigate, intuitive, and a pleasure to use by all. The Park should support infrastructure to make it easy to arrive via active and alternative transportation modes, from water or path network.





Heritage Park needs to be an accessible place. For the purposes of the master planning process, accessibility is used as a term to define the ease to which people can visit and use the Park, and how it meets the conditions of AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act). Universal design principles should guide path and plaza layouts, materials, and design. Park elements should seamlessly meet the infrastructure and mobility routes of Barrie. The physical alignment of Park amenities should related and draw from adjacent programming, with particular attention to be directed at downtown via Meridian Place and the various waterfront multi-use paths.

### **Recommendations for an Accessible Place**

i) Adherence to AODA regulations as they relate to the public realm are binding. Further to this, universal design strategies should be broadly employed across programming and amenity areas.

- AODA's Design of Public Spaces Standard will provide guidance for the spaces and amenities at Heritage Park. There are requirements for accessible paths, beach access routes, sidewalks, ramps, crossings, seating, parking, etc.
- Heritage Park should be designed to the standards of universal design. This means that the Park can be accessed and understood, regardless of age, size, and ability, by the greatest number of people possible. Universal design will be considered as a condition of well-functioning and high quality public space design during future design work. PIC and stakeholder feedback confirmed the need to implement a high degree of standards when it comes to accessibility. Beyond the binding regulations of AODA, a universal design approach presents an opportunity to create a Park with spaces that are legible, flexible, equitable, and intuitive to use.

ii) Future design work at Heritage Park will ensure physical and visual connections to adjacent public spaces are reinforced to contribute to a strong waterfront and downtown public space network.

- Barrie has a great waterfront trail system that connects many parks with a range of amenities and programming. The energy and dynamism at the waterfront should coalesce at Heritage Park through continued programing, but more importantly established connections to the path systems, like the North Shore Trail and Trans Canada Trail. What was heard during the PICs was that Heritage Park should continue to be a place to meet and a place to stop and enjoy its location on Kempenfelt Bay. Users of the waterfront paths should have a choice of

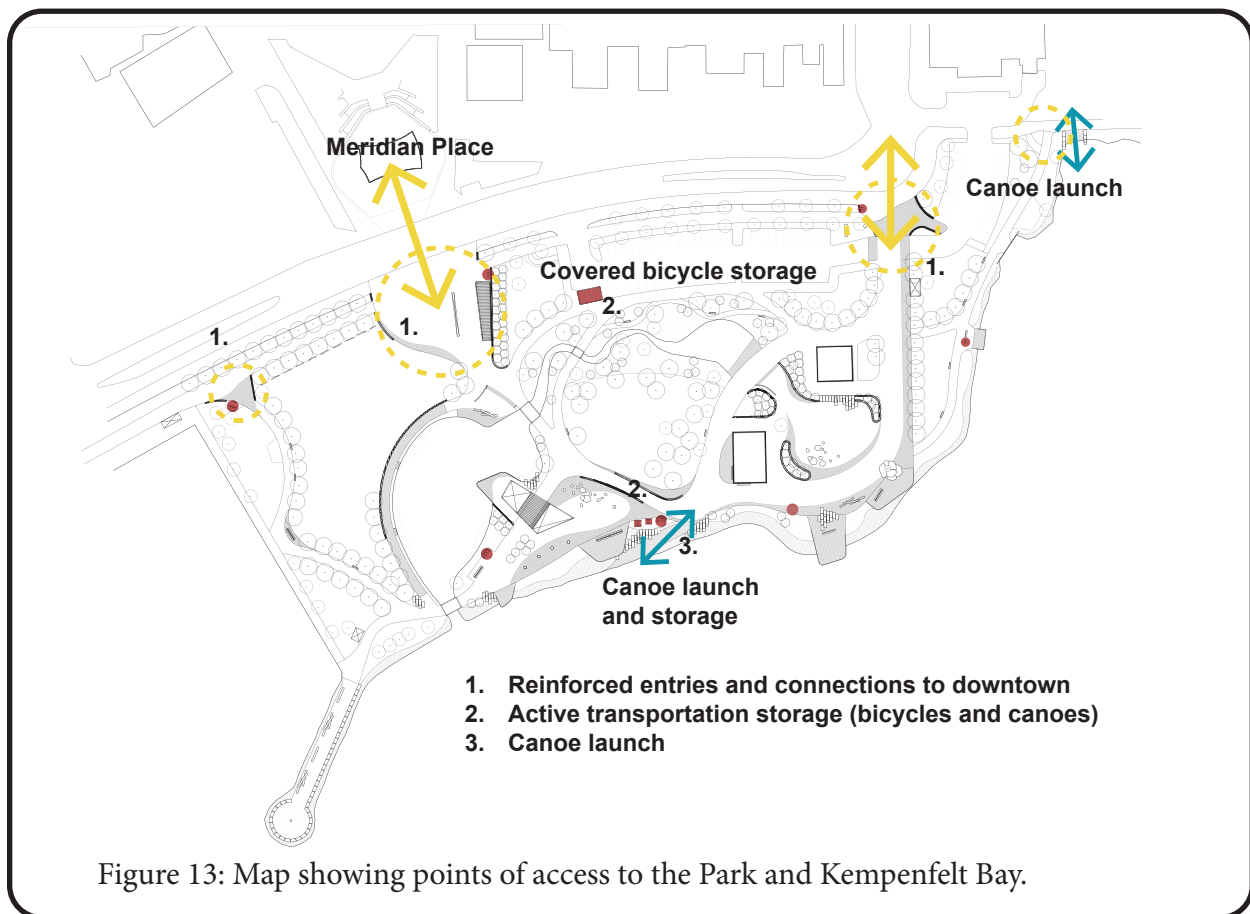
routes into the park, and places to stop and rest. There should be indications to path users that they have entered the Park through thoughtful design and signage. Future detailed design work at Heritage Park should consider way-finding and legibility at the scale of the pedestrian. Maintaining and improving path connections will benefit active transportation participation.

- Connections to downtown are paramount to a successful park system in central Barrie. Heritage Park is the linchpin in downtown and waterfront park networks. A key connection to be made is that between Heritage Park and Meridian Place. This should be considered as a multi-faceted strategy with program support (see: “An Eventful Place”), visual links, and ease of movement across Simcoe Street. The Master Plan Concept proposes a major entry plaza across from Meridian Place that should be designed to a scale to accommodate spill-over crowds from events at Meridian Place. This entry plaza and Meridian Place should communicate as a single space during larger events that may take place there. In this vein, there should be urban design solutions at the street that aid in strengthening the connection between these public spaces, as confirmed from stakeholder feedback. A secondary plaza is proposed at the bottom of Mulcaster Street. This plaza should be considered as an urban forecourt, reflecting the prominence of City Hall Plaza and the MacLaren Art Centre.
- Connections to adjacent and nearby public amenities should be relatively seamless, notwithstanding design demarcations and way-finding that announce entry into Heritage Park. The goal of using accessibility as the primary driver of connection is to have Heritage Park contribute to a cohesive social space, where all are welcome and the energy is palpable.

iii) Active transportation should be supported through parking infrastructure and new connections across land and water.

- Future detailed design work should ensure improved connections to Kempenfelt Bay via non-motorized means. The proposed canoe launches can be promoted as part of a potential water-based active transportation corridor, as there is proposed storage for canoes, kayaks, and stand up paddle boards. Heritage Park can be a place to arrive by self-propelled watercraft and enjoy the Park or downtown amenities.
- Bike storage is proposed across the Park in the form of bicycle racks. In addition to this future detailed design should include the construction of a covered bicycle parking structure.

The convenience of a structure like this would ensure broad support for cycling in Barrie is supported and provide an easy and useful way for people to arrive by bicycle and feel comfortable staying a few hours for an event.



### **3.3.5**

## **An eventful place.**

Heritage Park should accommodate hosting City events, with consideration for maintenance, event turnaround, and infrastructure needs (electrical and water.) Large lawns, widened paths for market stalls, and viewing areas for water-based events should all be considered. Spaces should be designed to be multi-functional, allowing for varied programming, including passive use. Passive use is an important part of Heritage Park's programming and should be thought about within the context of an active and vital centrally-located Park.





Heritage Park hosts many events in all seasons. It is the preeminent hosting park for a number and size of events that take place in Barrie. The largest of which are Winterfest and Canada Day festivities, which attract 20,000 and 50,000 visitors, respectively. Stakeholder and PIC feedback revealed the need and desire for Heritage Park to continue to be a place for events, considering the infrastructure and services that will be required or updated. As Heritage Park is a dynamic public space with many expectations placed upon it, the various zones within the Park should be multi-use to accommodate the multitude of programming that is desired.

### **Recommendations for an Eventful Place**

i) Heritage Park will be designed to accommodate the needs of Parks Planning, Economic and Creative Development, Operations, and Recreation and Culture Services, including upgrades to services in the Park.

- Current services that are used by events are at the end of their useful life cycle. This includes electrical and water servicing. Consider the removal of unused hosebibs and align new ones with event zones, like lawns and plazas. Electrical outlets should be embedded into site design via seat walls and site structures, where possible. Ensure electrical and water servicing capacity is increased and done in concert with City events staff to ensure congruity with programming.
- Washroom facilities require water service upgrades. Ensure necessary future renovations and upgrades to the washroom facilities are done to meet community needs and AODA regulations and are done in coordination with any adjacent design work.
- Site design and programming should accommodate the needs of Water Services and the ongoing maintenance with the existing Pump 11 and Pump 14 facilities. This requires parking of work vehicles and tractor trailers. Consider the movement routes of these vehicles around the Park.
- To better support current and future events audio and visual connections should be considered in spaces such as the Event Lawns, Entry Plaza (at Meridian Place), and the Water Feature Plaza.
- Assess the status of the raised turf helicopter landing area on the Park's east shore and accommodate during the detailed design process.
- Washrooms should be open and maintained year-round.

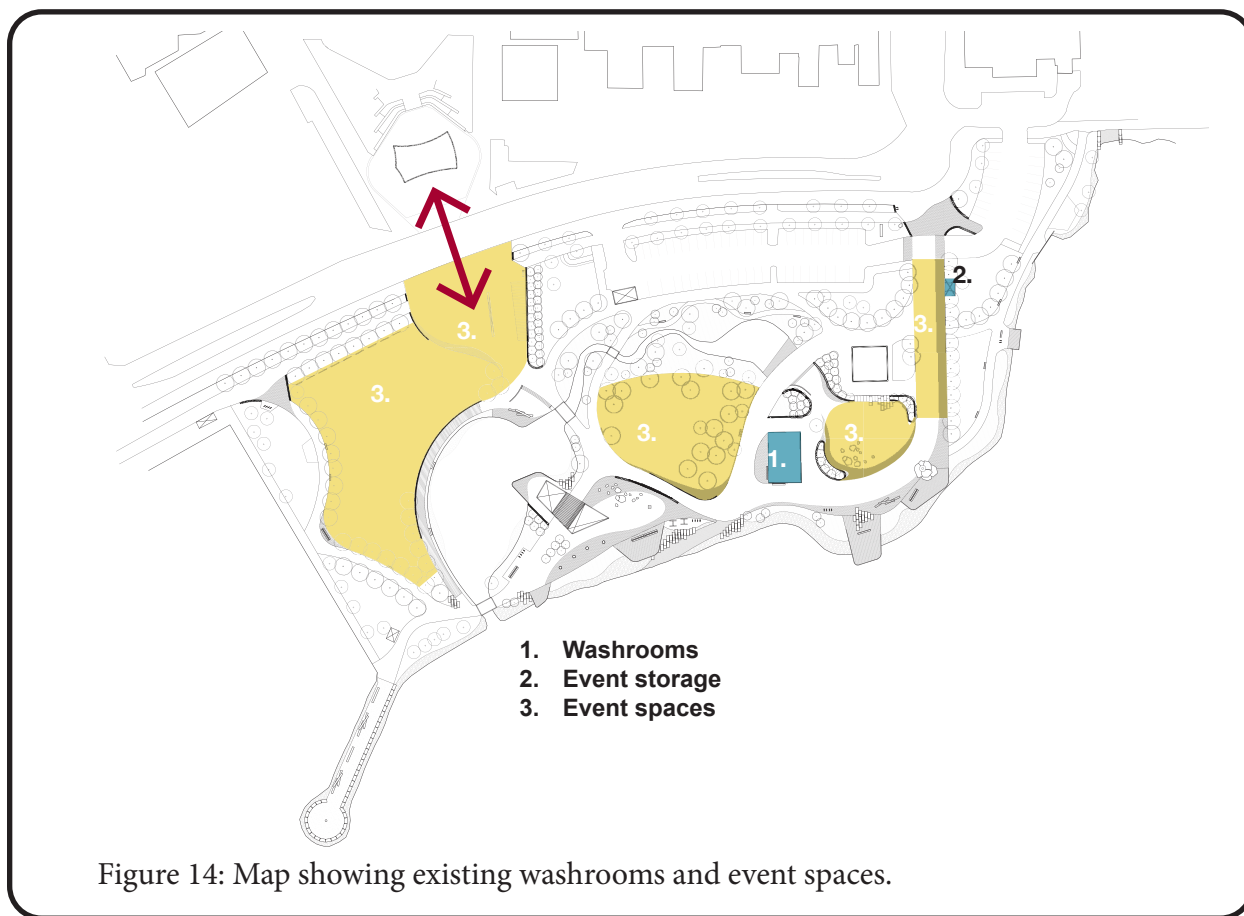
- A storage building could be located in Heritage Park for events and programming related storage.
- ii) Heritage Park should accommodate the events needs of the aforementioned City groups and other primary stakeholders that use the Park, with reference to space planning.
- Current events programming has the lawn areas as the busiest event spaces in the Park. Heavy use by crowds, vehicle, and staked structures is very hard on the lawns and the grass does not get the time to recover between events. Lawns may still be used for events, however proposed plazas and paths will be great spaces for events, with the required services aligned to these zones. Plazas and linear-oriented spaces like paths should be designed to the dimensions required for event infrastructure, with close attention to be directed towards path widths where events like markets may take place. Hardscaped surfaces will open up better areas for events, improving the ease to which maintenance and resiliency can happen. Hardscape materials should be pedestrian-scale, with details that outline rentable zones and textured for interest. Materials should be long lasting and high quality. These zones will also benefit from being thought of as multi-use and flexible spaces and be able to accommodate a wide range of uses by City staff, events organizers, and visitors.
  - Many events will still be held in lawn areas. Relocating some events to proposed path and plaza areas will alleviate some stress on the lawns, however irrigation will still be required to ensure the health of the grass. In addition to this, the existing irrigation is at the end of its life-cycle and will require replacement. ‘No stake zones,’ where tents and other event structures cannot be located to avoid damaging underground services, should be planned during detailed design.
  - The desire to see more music and cultural events was suggested by many respondents during PIC 2. Spaces that would most likely best support this type of programming include the Entry Plaza (across from Meridian Place), the two main lawns, and the Water Feature Plaza. If the event is more market-like, linear spaces like the Events and Gathering Allee would suit this well. Park spaces that can accommodate events, considering the size of the event and particular programming, should be outfitted with connections to services like electricity and water.
  - Consider spaces for start-ups and incubators to support local entrepreneurs. These spaces would require audio/visual connections.

iii) As Heritage Park is heavily programmed with active programming, future detailed design of the Park will need to take into consideration the smaller events that take place at the social scale of friends and family. In other words, small gatherings, some of which may be spontaneous, need to be accommodated too.

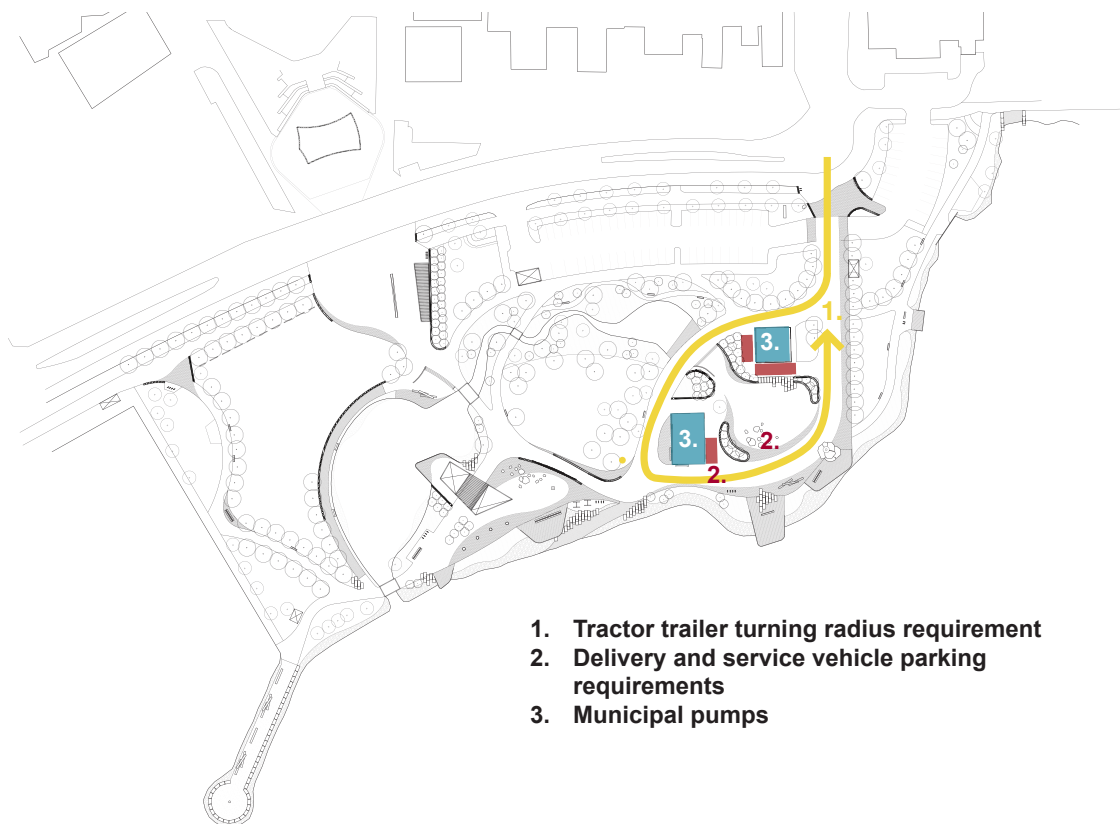
- Ensure there are plenty of lawn spaces, a diversity of seating options, and strong physical and visual connections to Kempenfelt Bay. Facilitating passive programming will contribute to an active Park in all seasons and times of day. Consider there are many ways to promote gathering, such as seat walls, benches (with backs and arms), movable seating with tables (places to eat had been suggested by PIC participants), stone blocks, water amenities, and in general, spaces that are perceived as safe and comfortable.
- Privately-booked spaces will need to ensure the general function of the park. Any elements or spaces that are considered integral to visitor experience should be maintained as free and open during privately-booked events.

iv) Heritage Park should ensure events and spaces are for all, focusing on principles of inclusivity. Building a sense of belonging, maximizing social connections, and indigenous reconciliation should be considered for future design work and events planning.

- Before detailed design takes place indigenous outreach should take place to ensure the highest level of coordination with respect to a location for a ceremonial fire pit. Previous discussions have determined one is needed, however location has not been established at this time. An appropriate level of care should be taken to determine the ideal location for the ceremonial fire pit and its relation to park programming, if it is to be located at Heritage Park.







1. Tractor trailer turning radius requirement
2. Delivery and service vehicle parking requirements
3. Municipal pumps

Figure 15: Map showing considerations for maintenance vehicles.

### **3.3.6**

## **A water place.**

Heritage Park should renew visitors connection to water, as an amenity and resource. Views and physical access to Kempenfelt Bay will be improved for accessibility, comfort, and accommodation of naturalized planting. The existing water feature should be redesigned to better reflect the renewed park programming. It should be multi-functional and accessible, providing various ways to safely interact with water. Passive and active engagement with water should be considered, as an artistic and restorative element.



Water, in many ways, is integral to Heritage Park's existence. The existing water feature, pond, and stream, as well as views of Kempenfelt Bay are primary waterfront attractions. The primary motivation of many of the proposed additions in the Master Plan Concept and highlighted in the Key Initiatives is to reinvigorate the Park's connection to Lake Simcoe. However, beyond this, water as a source of joy needs to be a driving influence on future Park development. Heritage Park is a great place to showcase Barrie's connection to water, as an amenity that promotes stress relief and rest, and as a tangible force of natural processes.

### **Recommendations for a Water Place**

i) Water features are proposed as an anchoring amenity in the Park to provide to showcase it as a safe and accessible interactive element.

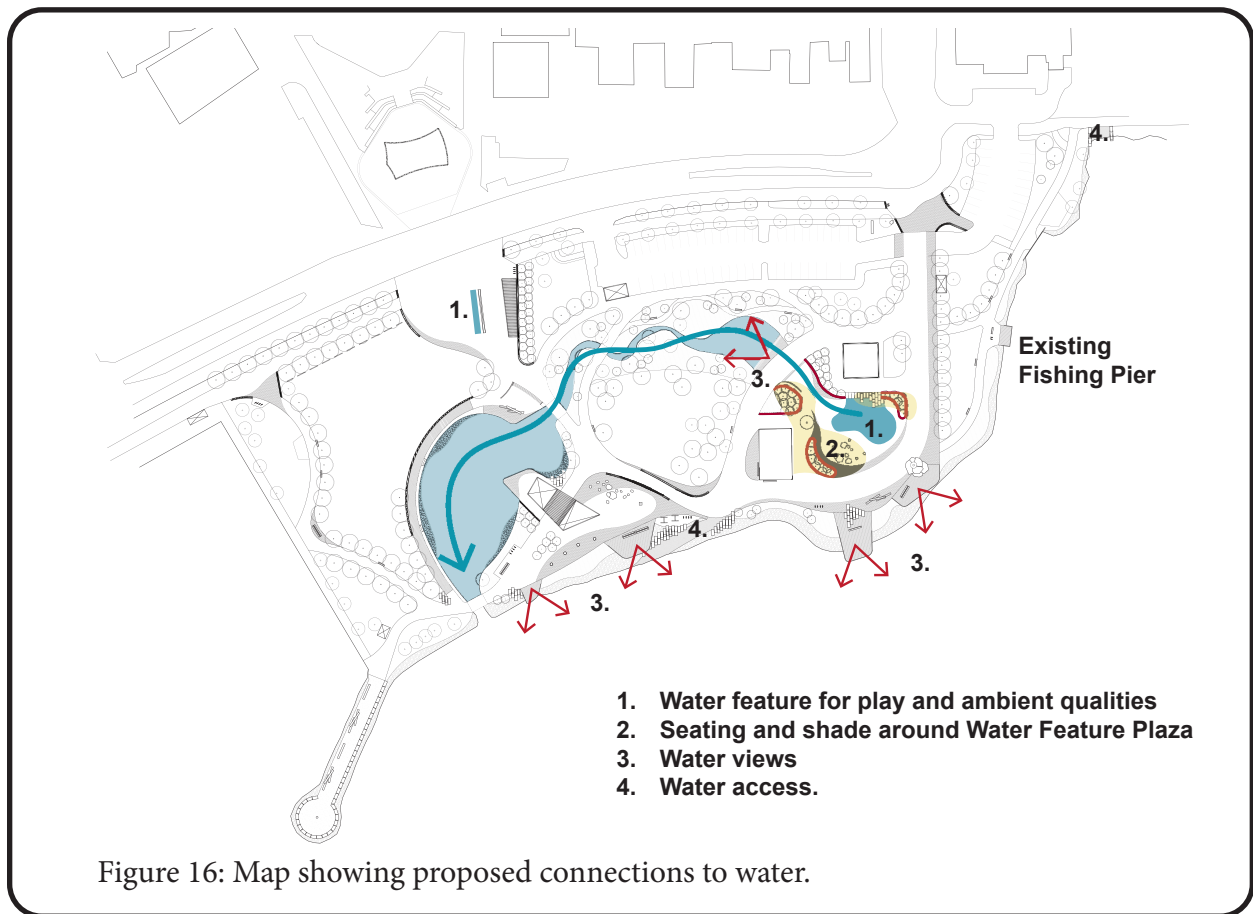
- The existing water feature has reached the end of its useful life and does not meet current standards of water play elements. Water service, drains, and treatment all require replacement. It needs to be integrated into proposed Park elements and spaces with new approaches to public realm design.
- The Water Feature Plaza, as shown in the Master Plan Concept, is an open multi-functional plaza space whose primary role as facilitator of water engagement and water play. This space will be well integrated into the rest of the park materially and formally, in other words it should contribute to a seamless visitor experience and contribute to the high level of design found in the rest of the proposed elements. Shade and seating is an important addition to the space and should enclose much of it (with informal stone seat elements scattered within), while considering the negative effects of leaf debris. Accessible ways to interact with water is important, as well. A water wall built of stone with a random pattern of water jets at grade will allow ease of use and visual prominence at wheelchair height. The plaza should read as thoughtfully-designed urban public space, with access for all. In addition to this the Water Feature Plaza should provide an example of multi-functionality of the Park's spaces. When the water amenity is shut off it can host small events, with consideration for lighting and audio to support these events. A popular suggestion from PIC 2 respondents was to see more music programming, and this plaza could support this at an intimate scale.
- At the detailed design stage, the inclusion of a water element at the plaza opposite Meridian Place should be considered. The water element should be well-integrated with adjacent plaza elements and support plaza programming.

ii) The existing pond and stream are to be retained and integrated into the proposed elements of the Master Plan Concept.

- The existing stream will benefit from improved visitor accessibility, while being framed by perennial gardens with trees and shrubs, providing a more 'natural' look to the Park. A proposed Viewing Deck at the existing bridge north of the Water Feature Plaza marks the source of its current, highlighting a view down across the naturalized gardens.
- The existing pond should be re-energized with new strategies for access and viewing. As shown in the Master Plan Concept, a new deck, edge-defining boardwalk, and aquatic planting will create new ways to experience the pond, in terms of it as an ecosystem and a programmable amenity. Ice skating should continue to take place on the pond and be maintained for safety and accessibility for such during the cold months to support winter programming. The proposed deck and boardwalk offer new ways to access the pond for skating during Winter. During the summer the pond will continue to be a place of solace, with improved notions of the 'experienced environment' and ecology.

iii) Water should be thought of as a source of relief, rehabilitation, and solace for Park visitors.

- The Master Plan Concept communicates a variety of ways that water is a grounding force and place-making device. The conceptual source of the stream is the Water Feature Plaza. From there it flows through a meadow-like landscape, settling into the pond, before finding Kempenfelt Bay. This water cycle in miniature is an important aspect in visitor experience and passive education. Coupled with a 'technical' approach in proposed water features, Heritage Park will offer visitors a sense of the local landscape character, while offering water-focused spaces for mental rehabilitation, relief from stress, and purposeful rest.









**The Central Plaza is punctuated by a shade structure, allowing for different ways to gather and relax at the waterfront. The plaza can accommodate future art and functions as a destination at the water.**



Figure 16: Image showing seating under the proposed shade structure in the Central Plaza.



Figure 17: Image showing the canoe launch, naturalized shoreline planting, and a Viewing Deck, with the existing washrooms in the background.



**The Kempenfelt Bay shore will be planted for biodiversity. Viewing decks allow visitors to experience the Bay without disturbing shoreline features. A watercraft launch supports safe arrival by canoe or kayak.**

**The future of Heritage Park will have more opportunities for active transportation, more accessible paths, and offer more diverse options for gathering with others.**



Figure 18: Image showing the Waterfront Promenade.



**The Water Feature Plaza is a multi-functional space where kids can play and interact with water and people can gather to cool in the summer.**



Figure 19: Image showing the Water Feature Plaza.



Figure 20: Image showing the Water Feature Plaza in the evening.



**The water jets can be turned off at the Waterfront Plaza to create an intimate space for events, including music.**



Figure 21: Image showing the stream with a proposed Viewing Deck in the background.



**Perennial planting provides more habitat and food for animals and insects, making Heritage Park a vital patch of nature in downtown. The diverse mix of planting offers a window into nature at the waterfront, which can help visitors recharge and alleviate stress.**

## 4.1 Cost Estimate

Item	Unit	Unit Price	Quantity	Quantity Cost
<b>1.0 Demolition, site prep, permits</b>				<b>\$ 393,750.00</b>
1.1 Site mobilization, bonding, survey etc	ls	\$ 150,000.00	1	\$ 150,000.00
1.2 Removals	ls	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
1.3 Temp. site perimeter fencing	lin m	\$ 30.00	750	\$ 22,500.00
1.4 Silt Fence @ perimeter	lin m	\$ 15.00	750	\$ 11,250.00
1.5 Tree protection fencing	ls	\$ 10,000.00	1	\$ 10,000.00
<b>2.0 Grading and earthworks</b>				<b>\$ 150,000.00</b>
2.1 Strip and stockpile topsoil	ls	\$ 75,000.00	1	\$ 75,000.00
2.2 Site grading	ls	\$ 75,000.00	1	\$ 75,000.00
<b>3.0 Paving + Surfacing</b>				<b>\$ 1,641,800.00</b>
3.1 Pathways	sq. m	\$ 120.00	4300	\$ 516,000.00
3.2 Market lane path (conc. Section)	sq. m	\$ 120.00	600	\$ 72,000.00
3.3 Central entry plaza	sq. m	\$ 120.00	1250	\$ 150,000.00
3.4 Central waterfront plaza (conc. Section)	sq. m	\$ 120.00	840	\$ 100,800.00
3.4 East plaza (unit paver)	sq. m	\$ 300.00	175	\$ 52,500.00
3.5 West plaza (unit paver)	sq. m	\$ 300.00	85	\$ 25,500.00
3.6 Unit paver details (vehicular paver on agg)	sq. m	\$ 300.00	1200	\$ 360,000.00
3.7 Permeable ramp to waters edge	sq. m	\$ 600.00	125	\$ 75,000.00
3.8 Concrete steps at pond edge	sq. m	\$ 800.00	50	\$ 40,000.00
3.9 Concrete seat walls throughout	lin m	\$ 1,000.00	250	\$ 250,000.00
<b>4.0 Shoreline stabilization</b>				<b>\$ 250,000.00</b>
4.1 Shoreline work (stabilize and add erosion control)	ls	\$ 250,000.00	1	\$ 250,000.00
<b>5.0 Electrical, site servicing</b>				<b>\$ 650,000.00</b>
5.1 Storm servicing	ls	\$ 250,000.00	1	\$ 250,000.00
5.2 Electrical site servicing upgrades	ls	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
5.3 Water servicing	ls	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
<b>6.0 Site features, furnishings</b>				<b>\$ 2,330,000.00</b>
6.1 Wood decks at waterfront	sq. m	\$ 1,600.00	450	\$ 720,000.00
6.2 Wood boardwalk at pond edge	sq. m	\$ 1,600.00	225	\$ 360,000.00
6.3 Feature pavilion	ls	\$ 350,000.00	1	\$ 350,000.00
6.4 Entry trellis	ls	\$ 100,000.00	1	\$ 100,000.00
6.5 Stone details throughout park	ls	\$ 300,000.00	1	\$ 300,000.00
6.6 Spit/ breakwater upgrade	ls	\$ 350,000.00	1	\$ 350,000.00
6.7 misc. Furnishings	ls	\$ 150,000.00	1	\$ 150,000.00
<b>7.0 Water Feature + Lighting</b>				<b>\$ 1,500,000.00</b>
7.1 Proposed Water feature	ls	\$ 1,000,000.00	1	\$ 1,000,000.00
7.2 Entry water feature	ls	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
7.3 Lighting	ls	\$ 300,000.00	1	\$ 300,000.00
<b>8.0 Planting</b>				<b>\$ 340,000.00</b>
8.1 Gardens including soil, mulch, plants etc (inc. trees)	ls	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
8.2 New irrigation	ls	\$ 100,000.00	1	\$ 100,000.00
8.3 Seed for restoration	ls	\$ 40,000.00	1	\$ 40,000.00
<b>9.0 Architecture</b>				<b>\$ 450,000.00</b>
9.1 Upgrades to washrooms	ls	\$ 200,000.00	1	\$ 200,000.00
9.2 Reclad/ re roof existing	ls	\$ 250,000.00	1	\$ 250,000.00
<b>### Additions</b>				<b>\$ -</b>

Subtotal \$ 7,705,550.00  
Contingency @ 20% \$ 1,541,110.00

**TOTAL \$ 9,246,660.00**

A.	Detailed Design and Contract Docs. (as per OALA Fee Guide)	%	6	\$ 9,246,660.00	\$ 554,799.60
B.	Contract Administration (as per OALA Fee Guide)	%	3.5	\$ 9,246,660.00	\$ 323,633.10
C.	Escalation	%	5	\$ 9,246,660.00	\$ 462,333.00
D.	Project Mgmt by City	%	4	\$ 9,246,660.00	\$ 369,866.40
E.	Testing & Geotech Investigation	ls	\$ 60,000.00	1	\$ 60,000.00
Total Design and Admin Fees				<b>\$ 1,770,632.10</b>	

### Notes/Assumptions:

1. The above is an opinion of Probable Cost Only
2. Construction contingency included at 20%

### The following have been specifically excluded:

1. Specialist consultant fees
2. Legal fees and expenses
3. Permits and development charges
4. HST and other taxes

# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1: Public Information Centre 1 Concepts



# Refresh



# Rehab







## **Appendix 2: Public Information Centre 1 Summary**

# Heritage Park

Summary of public input from PIC #1

## Master Plan and Design Concept

### Introduction

SHIFT Landscape Architecture, in coordination with the City of Barrie, hosted a public information centre (PIC) to provide information on the proposed design concept for Heritage Park. This was the first opportunity for the general public to review the direction of the design concepts and master plan concerns, including the project objectives, site background, precedents, and three design concepts.

The three design concepts were presented in a graduated approach, meaning there were three levels of intervention and investment, with consistent basic ideas across all three. The common threads introduced to all concepts were a reconsideration of the circulation network (paths) to better accommodate programming and accessibility and drawing on the regional landscape for design inspiration and to make more legible the idea of "place." The three concepts, from lowest level of investment to highest, were the "Refresh" concept, the "Rehab" concept, and the "Rethink" concept.

The PIC took place over two sessions from 2:00pm to 4:00pm and from 6:00pm to 8:00pm on May 27, 2021, hosted online using the Zoom webinar tool. The **PIC had 32 unique viewers\* and 27 unique viewers\*** to the 2pm-4pm and 6pm-8pm sessions, respectively. Following the PIC, a survey was posted on the Building Barrie website, along with presentation information to collect feedback and provide information about the design concepts, from May 27 to June 14. The **website had 633 visits and 197 downloads of the proposed concepts, 226 survey responses** were completed. In addition to the survey responses **7 email responses** were received, plus **21 documented comments from the PIC sessions** (10 and 11 comments for each session, respectively.) Following the PIC and comment period, SHIFT collected and reviewed the comments received in all formats. The following represents the public feedback collected to date for the design concept phase.

*\*Unique viewers by registered email. There could have been more than 1 viewer at home for each unique viewer email.*

### Survey design

With three graduated design concepts options being presented at the PIC and online, the survey was intended to determine what kind of programming visitors valued most. Demographic information of respondents was also gathered. Overall, the purpose of the survey is to assist in the development of the concept design, and ultimately the master plan document.

### Respondent demographic and visiting information

Of the 226 responses, 219 respondents reside in Barrie, 1 respondent owned property in Barrie, and the remainder (6) were not residents of Barrie. In which ward respondents lived (216 responses to this question), Ward 2 had 54 (24%), Wards 1 and 8 each had 35 (16%), all of which are located on Kempenfelt Bay (Heritage Park is in Ward 2.) The rest of the Wards all had a number of respondents from 10 to 19. The majority of respondents reside in wards located adjacent to Heritage Park and Kempenfelt Bay, however all wards were represented, showing the level of interest in the greater community in the master planning process.

The largest general age group of respondents was 26-44 (44%). The next highest was the 45-65 group (35%). The number of respondents from the 14-25 age group were 5% and 16% were from the 66+ age group. Respondents

were asked the age group of users that apply to their households (this question had 222 responses.) The 20-64 range was the largest number at 179 people. The next largest group was children 5-12yrs at 53, with 48 from the 65+ age group. Preschool children (0-4yrs) account for 40 respondent users, and teenagers (13-19yrs) with 29. The largest age group of users corresponded to the largest age range. With this in mind, the data generally shows the ages of users is varied and design decisions related to the master plan need to account for the large range, in terms of accessibility, safety, and function.

A survey question was posed about how visitors typically get to the park, checking all that apply, so users may have multiple ways that they get to the park. 145 respondents said car, 118 walk, 45 bike, 5 by bus. Alternative transportation and public transportation accounted for 167 of the responses. This indicates that the master plan and design concept needs to integrate environmentally conscious ways to support existing and new ways people access the park. The high number of users that arrive by car indicate the need to continue to support alternative ways to get to the park, while accommodating the existing parking, keeping in mind the requirement for parking lots for events. There should be options included in the master plan and design concept for better use of parking spaces to mitigate heat island and stormwater runoff factors.

Respondents were asked how often they visit the park (226 responded.) The largest number by time period was 85 visiting once a week. 58 visited once a month, 51 a few times per year, while 37 visit daily.

## Overview of uses, needs, and activities

The 3 concepts (Refresh, Rehab, Rethink) shared common themes but diverged in level of investment, which was evident in some of the layout and elements presented. In doing this the intent was to find general agreement amongst park visitors in the level of importance they feel certain activities and uses deserve going forward. PIC participants were not asked outright which concept they preferred, however the graduated concepts provided some context to engage participants on the value they apply to the activities (and the supporting elements) shown in the concepts. There was some uninitiated positive feedback on the Rethink concept, which displayed the highest level of investment, and not surprising as it had the most dramatic elements. The task going forward during the master plan and concept design development phase is to find the balance between needs and investment and integrate what participants value most.

Heritage Park is a public space that currently meets many demands from users, and this general requirement will not change in the future. The real civic value of Heritage Park is that it is a place for meeting, gathering, taking in views of Kempenfelt Bay, while hosting large and important events throughout the year. The master plan and design concept will ensure growing needs of the community are integrated into a functional and exciting park as development proceeds.

During the open house, participants were generally positive about the intent to create a master plan and concept design for Heritage Park to bring it to a contemporary standard and better meet the needs of park visitors. Many affirmed the approach to consider trees and shade as important, in addition to the environmental health of the shoreline. The need for a park design that is resilient to climate change impacts was strongly communicated. An accessible path network and renovated washrooms to meet current accessibility needs also came through strongly. Heritage Park's location on the Kempenfelt Bay ensured the importance of access to water, through retaining and reconditioning the existing water feature/splash pad and creating points of visual and possible physical access to the water at the shoreline.

The following summarizes the results of survey questions based on need/activity topics, with email and PIC comments included, as appropriate. 224 people responded to this question online:

### **Areas for group gathering**

*Survey: Very important/Important: 140; Not important: 28*

Spaces for gathering and picnicking with others is a feature that is quite important to park visitors. Additional comments via email and the PIC events specifically asked for areas with tables that accommodate this type of activity.

The master plan should be clear in introducing areas for eating and passive group gathering with tables.

### **Water features for water play**

*Survey: Very important/Important: 153; Not important: 20*

The largest response was for “very important” (91), indicating the level of desire for a redesigned multi-functional water feature. The concepts that were presented generally proposed treating the existing splash pad area as an opportunity to expand its functionality by approaching it as an element for mental restoration, sculptural interest, and pleasure, in addition to supporting physical play, through the introduction of various ways to interact with water. There were some comments (emailed and PIC event) about the water feature continue to be a safe place for children to play.

The master plan and concept design should make it clear the importance of water play, while considering accessibility, safety, and integration into the overall objectives of the park master plan, i.e.: mental restoration, introducing nature and art in an urban environment.

### **Ability to get close to Kempenfelt Bay**

*Survey: Very important/Important: 176; Not important: 11*

The existing park design does not safely accommodate reaching (walking, rolling, etc.) the shoreline and truly engaging with the water’s edge. There are many opportunities to view Kempenfelt Bay along Barrie’s waterfront, however the concepts that were presented intended to speak to accessibility, safety, and heightening the experience of getting to the shoreline. Two emailed concepts highlight the interest in Barrie’s connection to the water, one suggests easier access for personal watercraft users, the other as a historical amenity that should be cherished. The feedback suggests that accommodating this through boardwalks, decks, or similar are important to park visitors, and could go further by allowing physical access.

The master plan and design concept should continue to explore ways to fulfill the desire for this activity.

### **Open space for cultural events**

*Survey: Very important/important: 128; Not important: 26*

A total of 96 respondents applied a “neutral,” “somewhat important,” or “not important” valuation to this topic. This may be the result of the inevitability of Heritage Park operating as a primary event hosting site. Most respondents still consider Heritage Park as a premier place to host large and small organized events and that this function should carry through the master planning phase. There was an email comment from a neighbouring resident that stated the noise from events can be a nuisance. Another comment from the PIC asked for consideration of servicing (water, hydro, vehicle access) for events



The master plan and design concept should clearly designate well-supported event spaces and find ways to balance these spaces against the need for shade and quiet areas, while communicating the need for updated water and electrical services for events.

### Quieter areas

*Survey: Very important/Important: 144; Not important: 17*

As Barrie grows in population, considering downtown specifically, Heritage Park will continue to be a busy, urban place. Within the context of this there is a strong desire to accommodate quiet areas within the master plan and design concept. There was an emailed comment that speaks to this need, too. Quieter areas can be places of respite and contemplation and can have a positive impact on the well-being of park visitors. An emailed comment suggests that quiet gathering areas should be one of the primary reasons for visiting the park.

The master plan and design concept should clearly identify the need and location of areas that support this activity in a safe and accessible manner.

### Public art

*Survey: Very important/Important: 92; Not important: 52*

Although a higher number of respondents were neutral on this topic (51) and relatively high number deemed it “not important,” most found the integration of art into the Heritage Park to be important or very important.

The master plan and concept design should include a guideline for partnering with arts organizations for the display of temporary and permanent sculpture at Heritage Park. Sculptural art has already been demonstrated as a positive addition to the public realm in Barrie and Heritage Park and its use as a place-maker should be considered.

### Recognition of Indigenous histories

*Survey: Very important/Important: 119; Not important: 29*

Of societal importance is reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. Meridian Place, adjacent to Heritage Park, was an important landing area on a historical travel route for Indigenous people and some recognition is given to this there, however there may be opportunities to investigate, reach out, and include elements of recognition to Indigenous histories.

The master planning process should identify opportunities related to this topic. There was an attempt to connect with the Barrie Native Friendship Centre previous to the PICs and there will be more attempts to establish a connection through the master planning process.

### Trees and gardens

*Survey: Very important/important: 205; Not important: 1*

It may be suggested that including trees and gardens in the master plan and design concept is non-controversial. This topic is related or adjacent to mental restoration, quiet areas, climate adaptation, and shade, which further affirm

the desire for this. The challenge will be to find a balance between views to the bay and spaces for events with the desire for trees and gardens.

There were additional comments in support of introducing pollinator gardens (a more naturalistic approach to garden design) to the park, which would introduce ecological function, seasonal interest for visitors, and quiet respite for visitors.

The master plan and design concept development process should continue to integrate trees and gardens within the overall park design, while considering mental restoration, quiet, shade, pollinators, and native gardens.

### **Accessible washrooms**

*Survey: Very important/important: 188; Not important: 6*

The washrooms have been an unprompted topic of discussion throughout the master planning process to this point. There is general agreement that the washrooms at Heritage Park need to function better with respect to accessibility, and safety, but also as a changing area (as the marina and splash pad are adjacent) and its infrastructure.

The master plan document should include basic guidelines for a washroom renovation, highlighting the need for accessibility, safety, and functional needs, related to AODA standards at a minimum.

### **Shade**

*Survey: Very important/Important: 186; Not important: 5*

The topic of shade is clearly demonstrated as a desire for park visitors. It may be a reaction to a perceived lack of shade currently or looking for assurance that it will be maintained. Shade is an important public health concern and should be treated as such through the master planning process. The master plan and design concept should improve and make clear the need for shade.

### **Environmental health of the shoreline**

*Survey: Very important/Important: 206; Not important: 3*

The environmental health of the shoreline of Kempenfelt Bay is a highly valued topic for respondents. This is an important topic since the shoreline is the most regulated aspect of the park (via the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, or LSRCA) while offering the most to the park's overall character. Upon investigation of the shoreline it appears environmental or ecological supports are needed for improvement of the shoreline, while also considering water access and shoreline armouring. Despite the shoreline being regulated it seems that, based on the desire of park users, pursuing shoreline rehabilitation and water access will be worth the regulatory process that it will involve.

The master plan and design concept should include ways to improve the Kempenfelt Bay shoreline while considering visitor access, accessibility, safety, and ecological function, while continuing to consult and partner with the LSRCA.

### **Ability to adapt to climate change**

*Survey: Very important/Important: 186; Not important: 6*

This topic outlines a large-scale societal issue, however there are ways that Heritage Park in the future can be adaptable to anticipated changes in climate, with integrated queues for mitigation and adaptation. Respondents highly value this topic. Related or integrated items mentioned in the PICs or through email are stormwater runoff (in

terms of hardscape), pervious paving solutions, plant resilience, and low-mow or no-mow lawns. Previously discussed topics that are related and highly valued are the provision of shade, attracting pollinators, and the ecological improvement of the shoreline.

Through the master plan and concept design process climate change adaptation and the aspects of the park that respond to that should continue to be considered. The master plan and concept design should clearly highlight and state the responses to this topic and make legible the related improvements.

### Should outdoor fitness equipment be kept in Heritage Park?

*Survey: Yes: 42%; Don't Know: 22%; No: 36%*

Currently, there is outdoor fitness equipment located at two locations in Heritage Park and it was necessary to determine the desire to keep equipment at Heritage Park as it relates to the master plan and design concept process. The results show that fitness equipment is desired in Heritage Park, but not to a large degree. This question should be studied further with City staff.

### Additional ideas to highlight:

In addition to what was presented on the Build Barrie website and the PIC presentation, some comments of note should be documented and considered:

- **Watercraft launch;** consider as a part of alternative transportation and water access discussions: possibly 2 locations for kayak, canoe, SUPs, one quite formalized and another at the small, naturalized beach at the east end of the park
- **Winter picnic areas;** areas that consider the microclimate in winter for gathering
- **Washroom improvements;** accessibility is a key issue, along with safety, general functionality
- **Opportunities for food;** possibility of small, temporary stands integrated with linear event space or standalone
- **Consider noise pollution;** attempt to mitigate conflict between events and neighbouring residents, possibly through planting

## Conclusion

The 3 concepts (Refresh, Rehab, Rethink) shared common themes but different levels of investment and intervention, which was evident in some of the layout and elements presented. The graduated concepts provided a framework for engaging participants in discussion on the value they apply to the existing and potential activities (and the supporting elements) shown in the presentation material. The survey, along with emailed comments and PIC discussion, provided a lot of confirmation of the approach, so far, furthermore, it provided elements to think about go forward.

Some common themes that came out of the PIC process highlighted the importance of access to Kempenfelt Bay, of the environmental health of the park, and of the safety and accessibility of the park. Improvement of access to Kempenfelt Bay should be continued to be explored. Kempenfelt Bay is a great resource and amenity for the residents of Barrie and it is not surprising that Heritage Park is one of the ways people seek access to it. Ways to improve access can be achieved through designated walking, gathering, and lookout areas, with decks and boardwalks as possibilities. Maintaining the location but expanding the functionality of the existing water feature will add to the water amenities at the park, while providing a interesting and safe way to use water for mental restoration and play.

The environmental health of the park is a theme that is a critical aspect of the future direction and includes the ecological health of the waterfront, the introduction of pollinator gardens, and climate change adaptation strategies. As the master plan process progresses it will be important to take into consideration design and planning decisions that are rehabilitating and sustainable in a multifaceted and multi-scaled way. Consideration of stormwater runoff, shade, and planting for cultural interest and ecological benefits will be some of the ways that that this theme can be acknowledged.

Some feedback highlights a need to maintain and improve where it is necessary the safety and accessibility of the park. The washrooms should be mentioned in the master plan (as a guideline) as in need of renovation in this respect. The existing gazebo should be removed and opportunities for safe and accessible shade structures in the park should be considered. Paths, lookouts, seating, and special site features should all of options for ease of use through universal design standards and AODA.

The feedback provided from the community suggests that Heritage Park is a much-loved space in the City of Barrie. There appears to be a desire from most to strive for a thoughtfully designed, high quality park which will fulfill the needs of the City across a wide range of programmatic and experiential opportunities. Going forward a master plan will be developed that considers these desires in tandem with future capital expenditures that are deemed realistic to City staff, based on comparables both within the City of Barrie as well as with projects in Cities of a similar size. This information will allow the City to make sound decisions from both a park planning point of view and an economic one.

### **Appendix 3: Public Information Centre 2 Summary**



# Heritage Park

Summary of public input from PIC #2

## Master Plan and Design Concept

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### Introduction

The City of Barrie and SHIFT Landscape Architecture hosted two sessions of a Public Information Centre (PIC) on November 25, 2021. The PIC consisted of the presentation of the draft Master Plan and Concept Design with an open discussion following.

Presentation materials were posted on the Building Barrie website on November 9, along with a survey. The survey was intended to gain feedback on any outstanding items that may have been overlooked during the process to this point, but more importantly it was designed to engage the community and determine that the draft Master Plan responded to the outcomes of the first PIC. There were 987 visits to the site in total, 579 document downloads, and 123 survey responses. In addition to the survey 5 people contributed by email.

Generally, the survey responses confirmed the direction of the Master Plan from the first PIC to the second, with a strong number of responses in the affirmative for all questions.

### Summary of Survey and Email Responses

The primary intent of the online survey was to determine if the elements and programming that was deemed important by users in the first PIC were addressed and represented in the refined Master Plan and Concept.

### Survey Responses

#### Question 1. (see Appendix 1 for statements)

Question 1 was set up as a series of Likert items to determine if said items were successfully implemented in the final draft of the Master Plan. There was a scale of possible responses, including "definitely agree," "somewhat agree," "neither agree nor disagree," "somewhat disagree," and "definitely disagree." "Neither agree nor disagree" was integral to the scale of responses to allow for a "safe" answer and avoid leading questions. Respondents provided "definitely agree" (responding in the affirmative) to all statements more often than "definitely disagree" and "disagree" combined. This tells us that the development of the Master Plan is meeting the expectations of respondents and park users.

There is a high degree of certainty in the affirmative for additions like improved accessibility (88 agree/definitely agree, compared to 13 disagree/definitely disagree), continuing to accommodate cultural events (89 to 22), and improving the ability to arrive via alternative modes of transportation (96 to 13). New ways to interact with natural elements was also viewed as something the Master Plan is improving for park visitors (85-24), however with a higher response in the negative than the previously noted additions. These additions are important to the development of the park in the future and respondents agreed that the Master Plan was featuring these improvements.

Still with a high degree of certainty but with more "agree" balanced with "definitely agree" was the Master Plan's support of gathering in groups (87 to 17), addition of lawns for picnicking/gathering informally (88-22), introduction of biodiverse areas for bird and insect habitat (72 to 11), addition of more shade (75 to 15), and more spaces for

public art (85 to 13). The question of “more shade,” “more biodiversity,” and “more space for public art” had a relatively high degree of neutral responses (i.e.: “neither agree nor disagree”) than the rest of the questions (along with the “accessibility” statement previously mentioned). As the additions mentioned in these statements can be determined as a quantifiable improvement over existing conditions, then there may be room to improve communication of these improvements in the Master Plan document to try and minimize ambiguity.

Statements that had the highest responses in the negative could be better communicated in the Master Plan document, as well. The accommodation of cultural events (89 to 22), the provision of lawns for picnicking/gathering informally (88 to 22), and new ways to interact with natural elements (85 to 24) all had a relatively high amount of responses in the negative, meaning respondents did not see that the Master Plan showed an improvement in these areas. Despite this, the responses were overwhelmingly in the affirmative.

On the major points of improvements and additions in the Heritage Park asked about in Question 1 it was shown that the majority of respondents had the opinion that the Master Plan was responding to the desired outcomes of PIC 1.

#### A Note on “Neutral” Responses from Question 1

Question 1 in the online survey had respondents rate how successfully each statement was addressed in the Master Plan. In 4 of the 9 (statement 3,4,6 and 9) statements from Question 1 a neutral opinion was expressed at a rate that may not be an insignificant amount of the total responses. Questions where respondents chose “neither agree nor disagree” (representing a neutral opinion) likely indicates that there were a subset of respondents who are ambivalent (could go either way) or lacked sufficient knowledge to have a strong opinion. In all cases respondents replied in the affirmative more than any other category except for the question on improved shade where “agree” had one more response than “definitely agree” (38-37, respectively).

The four statements are considered non-controversial and integral to the plan (need for more accessibility, more shade, biodiversity and naturalization, and more spaces for public art) as determined through PIC 1 and work with the City of Barrie, so to remedy any communication issues the final Master Plan document will make clearer the intentions for improvement in these areas.

Further to this, Question 7 (favourite proposed addition) confirms many respondents’ favourite addition was shade, with some stating the naturalized elements or connection to nature as their favourite, despite the number who answered in the neutral to Question 1. Additionally, Question 4 asks respondents to check all that apply with different approaches to introducing natural elements in an urban environment with more than half responding that the Master Plan addresses these particular issues. Only “education and interpretation” concerning natural processes garnered less than half responding in the affirmative. This tells us that clarifying questions in the survey confirmed that shade and naturalized areas had been communicated well to this point. However, to ensure no ambiguity in the Master Plan intent the final Master Plan document could make clearer these.

#### **Question 2. Beyond upgrading the washrooms to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards, should additional upgrades to the washrooms be considered?**

The washrooms at Heritage Park have presented as a contentious issue with park users for a variety of reasons since the Master Plan project began. It was decided to confirm the concerns of park users through a question of washroom

upgrades. 65% of respondents agreed that additional upgrades are needed to the washroom beyond AODA standard upgrades.

**Question 3. (Follow-up to Q2) If yes, what would you suggest for additional washroom upgrades?**

To further guide any future improvements to the washroom respondents were asked what they would like to see improved. Cleaning and safety (13 responses related to this), accessible all year with longer hours, including winterization (11), the addition of separate changerooms (10), and no touch or hands-free taps, toilets, and dryers were the improvements mentioned most. 5 responses correspond with “family” washrooms or washrooms with change tables and 4 responses corresponded with the availability of drinking water. Gender neutral washrooms were mentioned more than once.

As has been noted since the beginning of the master planning project cleanliness and how safe the washrooms feel are a primary perceived issue. However, other responses tell us about park use. Heritage Park is a desirable destination (with the intention it will continue to be) all year for both passive use and for major events. Washrooms that are open all year and longer hours, family washrooms, and changerooms indicate the park is already popular with families and people using the water feature for recreation. The Master Plan is calling for more ways to get to the park using alternative transportation and the continuing relevance of the water feature as a play area, meaning changeroom, showers, change tables, more accessibility will continue to be an issue for park visitors.

**Question 4. The final draft Master Plan proposes to introduce more natural elements into the park. Taking cues from our area landscape, naturalized planting (with native and urban tolerant species) and natural materials have been introduced. In your opinion, the Master Plan responds to the need for (check all that apply): (see Appendix 1 for statements)**

The Master Plan calls for more focus on naturalized planting with seasonal interest, habitat, and an improved water’s edge (with consultation with the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority). The results from PIC 1 indicated that respondents would like to see more thought about how the park design can demonstrate climate change resilience and improve accessibility of natural elements. This question was intended to determine if those improvements were perceived and adequate from the park user perspective. 104 people responded to this question.

79 and 77 people agreed that the Master Plan showed improvements in accessibility to the restorative benefits of nature and additional support for biodiversity (habitat for birds and insects, environmental function), respectively. 68 respondents saw more space devoted to natural elements (including shade), 65 saw that the Master Plan was showing improvements in bring natural processes to the urban environment, and 61 saw improvement to the shoreline ecology. Only 40 respondents saw the Master Plan providing opportunities for education of environmental processes. If education and interpretation of the environment/ecology is a primary goal of the Master Plan, then this should be investigated further and communicated in the final Master Plan document.

The Master Plan intends to propose more ways for people to experience natural elements and make it easier to do so in an urbanized area, this is a primary goal in the redevelopment of the park. The responses confirm that most respondents see the value of this as communicated through the draft Master Plan, however there is an opportunity to ensure it remains a consequential and clearly communicated component of the concept plan.

**Question 5. The final draft Master Plan proposes that Heritage Park remains a safe and desirable place for all four seasons of the year. Do you see yourself visiting the park throughout the year?**

Heritage Park is currently a destination year-round, due to the events that take place there. The Master Plan is intended to continue to support such events, including winter events. There were 115 responses to this question.

74% of respondents saw themselves visiting all year. 7% did not, and 19% they would, weather-dependent. The high response rate to visiting all year (74%) shows the popularity of the park in all seasons. The Master Plan should continue to support winter events and seasonal passive use.

**Question 6. (Follow-up to Q5) If yes, what would make you want to visit throughout the year? (check all that apply) (see Appendix 1 for statements)**

This question was intended to determine what brings people to the park, year-round. 114 responded to this question.

The highest responses for visiting the park were for “cultural/city event” and “quiet, restorative walk” at 81 each. This shows the primary challenge and point of interest for Heritage Park, especially moving forward with the Master Plan development. It is a park where visitors expect passive use and major event use. The park’s future development needs to continue to meet these seemingly opposing needs through its layout and event management. Exercise and passive winter programming had 76 and 75 responses, respectively. Meeting friends or family was checked by 64 people. Only 18 check “other,” telling us that most reasons visitors come to the park have been accounted for, even as those reasons are as diverse as they are.

**Question 7. What is your favourite proposed addition to Heritage Park? (see answers in Appendix 1)**

This question was open-ended and intended to allow respondents to feel free to express the things about the draft Master Plan interested or excited them most. There was a relatively contained diversity of answers that shows consensus around some of the interesting proposals of the draft Master Plan, while aligning with some of the primary goals of the Master Plan process.

Respondents favourite feature or programming item was the lookout decks/water access. 30 reported that as their favourite or one of their favourite additions. 16 saw the canoe/kayak launch as their favourite. 11 respondents state that shaded areas were the improvement they liked most, with the same (11) number responding that the proposed naturalization/biodiversity was their favourite. The improvements to the water features/splash pad and the proposed fireplaces were among the favourite additions for 8 respondents, respectively. 5 respondents appreciated the upgrades to the paths, including at the pond and waterfront.

The favourite improvements or additions highlight the primary goals of the Master Plan, showing us that the goals were well-communicated and well-received. The Master Plan proposes a greater connection to water and natural elements, with more shade and biodiversity in planting and habitat-creation. It also proposes better ways to connect to the rest of the city through alternative transportation modes, with many responding the canoe/kayak launch as their favourite addition. Many of the responses align very well with Master Plan proposal.



**Question 8. Is there anything you would like to see included in the Heritage Park Master Plan that has not been mentioned or shown?**

The intent with Question 8 was to determine if there were any obvious demographic groups or park elements that have been missed.

Many responses were related to the proposed Heart Barrie sign. This project is not in our scope and through the Master Plan development process it will be accommodated as a proposed element. The responses to the proposed sign are negative, however there is some comfort with some concerning the "alternative location" of the sign, coordinated with Master Plan elements at the main entry plaza, across from Meridian Place.

Some comments such as a "bike lock-up," naturalized shoreline," and "removal of gravel path" are being tended to in the Master Plan, so more communication is maybe needed in the presentation of those. Other points should be considered through the next phase of the Master Plan process, such as the space around the fireplaces, lighting for safety, more seating, concession stands/food truck picnic tables, game tables, multi-sensory play (re: sound/music), inclusion of indigenous place names/history, and site lines for views and safety. All of these items either have been looked at or should be considered for discussion going forward. The amount of proposed permeable surfaces was mentioned, as well, in terms of the amount of concrete or asphalt there is in the Concept Plan, however the goal of AODA accessibility is determining hard surface path materials. Runoff should be considered at the detailed design stage, however.

**Question 9. If there is an activity you would like to see at Heritage Park in the future, please list it here:**

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Car shows	2
Walking	2
Exercise equipment	2
Skating rink or trail	7
Screen for movies	1
Theatre events	2
Live music (busker, jazz)	7
Indigenous programming (pow wow)	4
Yoga events	1
Garden tour	1
Family-oriented events	1
Food	1
Art shows/exhibitions	2
Cultural events	1

Outdoor education events	1
Canoe/kayaking	3

Question 10. If there is an event you would like to see at Heritage Park in the future, please list it here:

EVENT	NUMBER OF RESPONSES
Music events (many genres, cultures)	14
Theatre events	4
Vendors/markets	5
Food, drink events	4
Indigenous cultural events	2
Movie nights	2
Art	3
Learning/educational events	1
Yoga/meditation/fitness classes	2
Ecology/environmental education	1
Cultural events	1
Car show	1
Skating	1

### Emailed Responses

There were five emailed responses from the public. The suggestions were varied, highlighting certain interests respondents have in the park, while other respondents would have benefited from the open forum of the PIC to alleviate some of their concerns.

One respondent suggested the addition of games tables for chess and checkers, with the intent of increasing passive recreation opportunities with the possibility of competitions being held. As more tables and seating would benefit all, while allowing for some additional passive use, this could be looked at closer for inclusion in the Master Plan.

There was a suggestion from a respondent who is a participant in the South Simcoe Rebel Rollers that Heritage Park could be an appropriate place for a roller rink. There is no plan to locate any sport courts or rinks at Heritage Park (other than flooding the pond for winter skating), however there could be an opportunity to consider a roller rink elsewhere in the city. The Recreation and Cultural Services will look further into this item. In terms of roller sports, the proposed paths would provide a surface appropriate for roller skating and roller blading.

There was a suggestion from a respondent that was mentioned once in the survey concerning the inclusion of a single board for donors to the Winter Rotary Light Show.

Lastly, a respondent suggested better and more frequent access to the washrooms, especially for the use as a changeroom for kids using the water feature. This mirrors other comments from the survey concerning the washrooms.

### Indigenous Ceremonial Fire Pit

During the PIC it was mentioned by a participant that something honouring the Indigenous peoples of the area may be appropriate at Heritage Park. Heritage Park is the general waterfront location of the 9 Mile Portage, so there is significant Indigenous heritage present, and Meridian Place pays homage to this. Since the PIC there has been some internal coordination and discussion with an Indigenous consultant, as there was previously planned an Indigenous ceremonial fire pit at another waterfront location in Barrie. This remains an ongoing process.

The question has arisen: is Heritage Park an appropriate place for a ceremonial fire pit? From internal discussions there is concern that a busy park may not be best suited for a sacred fire, however the park's central location is a benefit. Furthermore, locating a sacred fire at Heritage Park would give some credence to the term "heritage." There should continue to be more discussion to see if the Heritage Park is an appropriate location for this type of programming and if there is something else to be included in the Master Plan that honours the Indigenous heritage of the waterfront area. A recommendation will be included in the Master Plan to reach out to Indigenous representatives on the topic of a ceremonial fire pit.

Where the "heritage" moniker came from and the intention behind its use will be investigated further and reported on.

## Appendix 1

Heritage Park Master Plan Consultation Questions as Posted on Build Barrie for PIC #2



# Heritage Park Master Plan consultation: Public Session #2

Building Barrie

## Tell us what you think about the final draft Heritage Park Master Plan concept and design

After reviewing the refined [Heritage Park Master Plan and Concept Design](#), tell us your thoughts! Barrie residents, property owners and interest groups are invited to complete this online survey by **Friday, December 10, 2021**.

Public feedback from this community engagement process will be incorporated into the Heritage Park Master Plan staff report that will go to Barrie City Council for consideration in early 2022.

Thank you for your feedback!

Based on the final draft of the Master Plan, please rate the following statements:

Questions	Definitely agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Definitely disagree
The final draft Master Plan responds to the desire for gathering in groups.					
The final draft Master Plan responds to the desire for open space for cultural and community events.					
The final draft Master Plan allows for enhanced access and accessibility (barrier-free) throughout the park.					
The final draft Master Plan responds to the desire for more shade.					
The final draft Master Plan responds to the desire for lawns for picnics and informal gatherings.					
The final draft Master Plan increases biodiverse naturalized areas for bird and insect habitat.					
The final draft Master Plan provides new ways to interact with natural elements within an urban environment, including water (e.g., water feature, Kempenfelt Bay).					
The final draft Master Plan accommodates ways to arrive at the park through alternative modes, such as walking, bicycle, canoe, kayak, and standup paddleboard.					
The final draft Master Plan supports existing public art and provides new spaces for public art.					

Beyond upgrading the washrooms to meet Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards, should additional upgrades to the washrooms be considered?

(Choose any one option)

☐ Yes

☐ No

If yes, what would you suggest for additional washroom upgrades?

The final draft Master Plan proposes to introduce more natural elements into the park. Taking cues from our area landscape, naturalized planting (with native and urban tolerant species) and natural materials have been introduced.

In your option, the final draft Master Plan responds to the need for (check all that apply):

(Choose all that apply)

# Heritage Park Master Plan consultation: Public Session #2

## Building Barrie

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- ☐ Accessibility to the restorative benefits of nature (relaxation, positive mental health impacts , quiet)
- ☐ Biodiversity (improved habitat for birds, insects, bees, water species and environmental function)
- ☐ Opportunities for education about the natural landscape
- ☐ More space devoted to natural landscapes and planting (more shaded areas)
- ☐ Improved ecology at the shoreline
- ☐ Bringing natural processes to an urban environment

The final draft Master Plan proposes that Heritage Park remains a safe and desirable place for all four seasons of the year. Do you see yourself visiting the park throughout the year?

(Choose any one option)

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe, would depend on the weather

If yes, what would make you want to visit throughout the year? (check all that apply)

(Choose all that apply)

- ☐ Cultural or City event
- ☐ Meeting friends or family
- ☐ Quiet, restorative walk
- ☐ Opportunity to exercise (walk, run, skate, etc.)
- ☐ Passive winter programming (skating, snowshoeing, temporary art exhibits, light displays, bird watching, etc.)
- ☐ Other (please specify)

What is your favourite proposed addition to Heritage Park?

Is there anything you would like to see included in the Heritage Park Master Plan that has not been mentioned or shown?

If there is an activity you would like to see at Heritage Park in the future, please list it here:

If there is an event you would like to see at Heritage Park in the future, please list it here: