Blueprint Collingwood:
A People’s Vision for the Town of Tomorrow

ABRIDGED REPORT

A report prepared by the Vision 2020 Committee of the Town of Collingwood
23 October, 2000
# Blueprint Collingwood: Contents

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Why does Collingwood need a vision for the future? The short answer is because without a vision, the community will not have a sense of direction. In this day and age, a Town without a sense of long term direction puts its very future in jeopardy. This is a sweeping statement, perhaps, but it is one that bears out upon reflection.

Community comes from the Latin word *communitas*, and it is from this same Latinate root that we get words like “common” and “communicate.” The inference that we may take from this is that community implies the notion of shared values and a sense of equilibrium – a point of relative equality that comes from a mutually agreed upon way of life.

Collingwood has a number of well-defined periods of community development. These incarnations make up various different eras in the history of the Town. They begin with aboriginal history and wind their way down through the arrival of the first settlers to the area, to the incorporation of the Town in 1858, to the development of the area as a shipbuilding capital for the nation and a recreational area.

The various historical streams that have contributed to Collingwood’s sense of community are reflected in the Town of Today: a thriving industrial and commercial sector that is paired with an expanding recreational and services-oriented base.
Blueprint: Methodology

Introduction

Vision 2020 is a committee struck by the Town of Collingwood to look at growth management issues. Since its creation in January 1999, the Committee has met regularly to investigate matters relating to Collingwood’s growth and development. Its composition includes representatives from: the Municipality, Economic Development Advisory Committee, Georgian Triangle Economic Development Corporation, Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Collingwood, and the First Street business corridor.

The overall aim of the Vision 2020 Committee was to come up with a vision for the future of the Town. To do this, the Committee employed a number of different methodological strategies for a variety of different purposes. These are discussed in summary here.

Principally, these methodologies can be categorized under four broad headings:

- Primary and Secondary Research and Literature Reviews
- Fact-finding Missions
- Supreme Ruler Survey
- Visioning Workshops ("focus groups")

Each of the different types of methodological strategy was employed for a given purpose. The purpose of this “mixed-methodology” approach was to give the overall vision for the future (as well as this report) a more integrated and comprehensive structure.

Primary Research and Literature Review

Amongst the first tasks that the Committee gave itself was to actively obtain as much information about Intrawest, resort communities, etc. etc.

This proved to be a rather substantive task.

Committee members realized that there was a considerably broader picture than had originally been expected. Indeed, there are far more issues affecting the future of the Town than the location of a major resort development next door. Literature from other communities pointed to a larger ecology of issues: affordable housing, traffic management, and environmental considerations, to name but a few.

Intrawest and other developments may highlight the importance of these issues, but they are not their source; rather, they are one part of an increasingly complex puzzle known as community development.

Committee members reviewed videos, books, studies, maps and reports from both Collingwood and from communities throughout North America.

Fact Finding Missions

Tremblant – May 1999 – Committee members attended 3 days of meetings in Mont Tremblant and St. Jovite, P.Q., to develop an understanding of relevant community issues raised as a result of the Intrawest development in their region.

Tremblant – August 2000 – Council members and town staff visited Mont Tremblant and St. Jovite as it was essential for them to also see as much as possible in order to appreciate the scale of Intrawest.

Conferences & Meetings – Committee members attended various conferences, meetings, consultations and seminars over a 20-month period on relevant matters.

Supreme Ruler Survey

From the beginning, the Vision 2020 Committee felt that the best way to devise a vision for the future of the Town was to do so as democratically as possible. Following the completion of our preliminary research and first fact-finding trip, we embarked on the community consultation phase of our work. To that end, we developed a series of data-gathering devices...
that sought to explore the ideas that friends and residents had for the Town of Tomorrow.

We decided that the best approach would be to start with a broad-based survey. In January, 2000 we commissioned the design of a bold and colourful survey that we felt would pique the attention of recipients and stimulate their interest in the project. Early on, however, we discovered that devising a survey was not as easy as might be expected. The principal issue that we encountered was that the simplest and easiest type of survey – with tick boxes and numbers for people to rank and sort – was also impossible to write. The issues that faced Collingwood were too numerous, too broad and too interconnected for them to be reduced to lists or things to rate.

What we opted for instead was an approach that, methodologically, was a bit more radical. We broke our survey into ten key theme areas and then wrote a series of very open ended-questions for each. The theme areas – overall vision, priorities, transportation, downtown, attractions, Harbourlands, environment, housing, finance and regionalism – had questions written that were devised to stimulate thinking and elicit responses. We asked people, for example, if the Town should have a casino or a statue of Elvis because we knew that, even if they didn’t (and not many people did) that people would nevertheless be forced to think about what the Town did need. The overall theme of the survey was grand in scale. We asked people to pretend that they were the “Supreme Ruler” of Collingwood and had unlimited power to do anything they wanted with the Town.

Throughout February we mailed out one of these surveys to each one of the 6,500-plus household in Collingwood and made them available at stores and services throughout the Town. Drop boxes were made available in key areas. A web-site version of the survey at www.vision2020.net allowed respondents to submit their answers via the internet. We also set up a telephone hot-line to allow people to call in their ideas for the future. We prefaced our distribution of the surveys with a media campaign that involved radio and newspaper promotion as well as weekly mentions at Town Council.

At the same time we developed and distributed a children’s survey that was based around the same theme. We asked children to write or draw pictures about how they envisioned the future of the Town and, indeed, what they too would do if they were Supreme Ruler. The children’s survey was dropped off at local public schools where a number of teachers integrated them into class work. The regular Supreme Ruler surveys were similarly dropped off at the area high-schools.

In the end, we received 1275 surveys back about 85% of which were the “regular” ones. (Although there was an end of March deadline, responses to the Supreme Ruler brochure continue to trickle in). It is impossible to know the precise demographic details of the survey. Almost one quarter of them were submitted anonymously. Others were filled out collaboratively, by multiple family members and different hands. We feel a conservative estimate of the number of people involved with the survey would be somewhere between 1600 – 1800. People from across all sectors of Collingwood filled out the survey – from carpenters to lawyers, homemakers to home-builders, gas-station attendants to retired civil servants.

The following illustrates the demographics behind the surveys in terms of the respondents and what they answered:

**Age**

The problem with making statements about the survey results based on age is that a vast number of respondents (490), chose not to indicate their age. The result was an age breakdown that was skewed very much in favor of the under-18 category (which included the separate Children’s Survey).

However, many of the unidentified ones were submitted via drop-box, web and to a much lesser degree, by telephone. An analysis of their content leads us to the conclusion that the majority of these
likely came from adults over 18 years of age. Thus, in total we estimate that there was approximately a 60/40 split between adult and under-18 respondents, with numbers roughly 700 adults and 500 under-18 respondents.

Residents / Friends

Again, a large number of respondents (554 or 43.4%) chose to leave their address information off the survey. Of the remainder, 73.4% indicated they were residents, while 26.6% said they were “Friends” of the Town – workers, visitors to our stores and services, tourists and more.

Questions

A total of 6906 question-answers were submitted. Respondents averaged 5.4 questions per survey.

In order of the number of responses on a given question, the most popular topics were – Overall Vision (897), Attractions (869), Transportation (805), Priorities (795), Downtown (774), Harbourlands (658), Environment (541), Finance (487), Housing (478) and Regionalism (378). It would be a mistake, however, to assume that this breakdown reflects the popularity of a given issue in the community. The reason being is that particular issues – notably Harbourlands, environment and traffic, featured prominently in the answers that people submitted on a variety of topics. The Harbourlands, for example, appeared as a key subject in the “Attractions” question, while the Town’s natural environment was a subject that was woven in good quantity into answers submitted for all questions.

Then began the daunting task of analyzing this data. Completely transcribed, Supreme Rulers put down roughly 230,000 words in over 600 typed pages of reading on the future of Collingwood. Needless to say, this had exceeded the Committee’s wildest expectations. Between the conclusion of the survey and now we have been analyzing the data, Clustering and reviewing ideas.

Community Visioning Workshops

After having initiated the analysis of the Supreme Ruler brochures Vision 2020 felt that it was important to attempt to dig a little more deeply into the idea of an overall vision for the Town of Tomorrow. To do this however, the Committee felt that there was a need to seek additional expertise to further this end.

This lead to a research partnership between the Committee, Trent University’s Tourism Studies Group and Rhythm Communications. Trent University Professor Alan Law has written a number of articles on Collingwood and was able to assist the Committee by helping to define key data sets that were required to understand present trends in Collingwood, as well as framing the present needs of the community.
Ruth Christianson and Heidi Shaeffer from Rhythm were brought in on Professor Law’s recommendation. Together, the three partners developed a series of Community Visioning Workshops in which citizens of the Town – a mix of survey respondents, notable community members and randomly selected residents were invited to participate in one of two three-hour visioning exercises held in late May. The two workshops gathered 110 individuals from all walks of life, a representative sample of the Town’s populace, to hear in more detail, what they wanted for the future.

The aim of the workshops was to explore specific issues associated with people’s vision – particularly people’s meaning systems, core values and beliefs. The approach employed a mixed methodology set up to elicit pictorial and verbal responses. As Rhythm stated in their final report to the Committee:

“This ... method quickly and efficiently uncovers peoples deep, fundamental feelings and motivations”

The result was a very clear snapshot of people’s meaning systems on a variety of issues. Indeed, what pleased Vision 2020 about Rhythm’s approach was the fact that they emphasized the actual visual element involved in visioning. By having participants draw pictures, another more hidden dimension of people’s wishes and desires comes to the surface.

“...Drawings get at what people can’t or won’t say. Drawings allow us to cut through disciplines and through the cultural, linguistic and literacy divides of respondents.”

Having respondents express their desires visually allowed for another element to be drawn into the process. On the advice of Rhythm Communications, Vision 2020 took a statistical breakdown of the various subject matters found in participants’ drawings and solicited the assistance of the local arts community in rendering them more formally. All the points of commonality, as well as the colours that people had used in their drawings, were handed over to a small group of artists who had each agreed to help with the project. Working on an extremely tight deadline, these artists: Alex MacLeod, Cheri-Lynn Reithmer, George Hately and John Haines each attempted to take the various different objects and colours that workshop participants had used and distill them into one visual representation. The result was an exceptional exercise in artistic production: one graphic arts design, one water-colour rendition, an oil painting and a pencil sketch were produced. With the permission of the artists, three of these four pieces are reproduced at the end of Part One.


Vision 2020 found the collaboration with Trent University and Rhythm Communications to be extremely helpful to the development of our Blueprint. We have included materials drawn from the Visioning Workshops throughout the present document.
Introduction

The results and recommendations of Vision 2020’s research into the future of Collingwood are contained within the present document. This report is designed in a manner that aims towards efficiency in reading. The objective being a means to quickly and simply allow the reader to move between the various issues.

The Supreme Ruler survey alone generated a tremendous amount of words. The aim with the report is to distill these words and ideas down to their simplest form, while at the same time retaining a sense of the comprehensive and integrated nature of planning for the future.

It must be said at the start that the report is not complete. No report ever is. What we have aimed to produce here, however, is a document that touches upon each of the key issues and areas that we feel are part of an integrated and holistic vision for the future. We have also attempted to balance the “big” issues with thinking about a variety of the smaller, constituent elements that form these larger topics. The result, we hope, is a balanced document that produces, analyzes and then reproduces Collingwood in proper scale.

The report has been subdivided in various ways. A brief outline of these divisions follows...

How to read this report

The report has been designed to allow the reader to flow through the various subjects it covers in a fairly straightforward manner. Part One of the Blueprint covers background material, existing demographic trends and contextual data that attempts, we hope, to explain why there is such a pressing need to create a comprehensive vision for the future.

Part Two is the largest section in the document, and the one that we anticipate will create the most interest. This is the section containing the results of our research, our breakdown of issues, and, most importantly, our recommendations on the various initiatives and activities that we believe the Town should undertake. Part Two is composed of a number of chapters that correspond roughly to the various theme areas around which we based the Supreme Ruler survey. There is some modification here. A survey question that asked people to “list their priorities” has had its results integrated into the other theme areas. Second, to reduce overlap, the sections on Downtown and Attractions were combined into one chapter.

Each Chapter commences with a bit of an indulgence – a literary exercise in which we have attempted to paint a picture of the Town of Tomorrow from the vantage point of a citizen in the year 2020. This is followed by a listing of key goal statements that seek to highlight, for a particular issue, the essence of what it is that we feel Collingwood should be striving for.

This is followed by a quick snap-shot of the issues that currently or could potentially exist in a given area. Thus, the Transportation chapter lists issues such as the perceived lack of parking, the need for a greater move to alternative forms of transportation and so on. Each of these issues is then covered in more detail in its own sub-section. Here, we introduce more data, allow our survey respondents to have their say, and try to make sense of a means to provide a solution to the matter at hand. Each of the subsections then concludes with one or more recommendations that we, as a committee, feel would attend to the issue at hand. Recommendations are identified in a separate type face and are distinguished by the use of green print.

Part Three of the Blueprint attempts to provide a question to the very big question which we feel people will be asking after reading Parts One and Two: “What next?” This section, though brief, attempts to sketch out a plan of action that we feel will lay the
groundwork for the successful implementation of the People’s Vision for the Town of Tomorrow.

One final cautionary note needs to be made before concluding this current section. It concerns the presence (and in some cases, absence) of statistical data. It is extremely misleading to extrapolate a vision based on quantitative analysis alone. With surveys and research such as that which the Vision 2020 has undertaken we were faced with a choice. We could create data-gathering means whose goal would be large piles of sterile data on carefully chosen topics – with questions like “Rank the importance of the following attractions to your vision of Collingwood…”

Or there was the other alternative: we could let the survey be a bit more organic and open-ended to see what happened. We chose the latter. The result was that people submitted different types of answers for the same question. Some people mentioned the types of values they wanted to see in the Town of Tomorrow, while others mentioned specific items or things. Some people created responses that were more phenomenal in nature, while other people created very rational maps of how they envisioned the Town. The result is a series of responses that do not contain like data-types. This doesn’t mean that there weren’t points of overlap in the ideas that people submitted (there certainly were). It does mean, however, that it is far harder to put peoples answers side-by-side and make decisions based on numbers alone.

So, this is why the present document is not crowded with statistical permutations and frequency charts – for analysis of this nature would only do part of the job and only paint part of the picture. Moreover, had we based our document, analysis, recommendations, etc. on numbers alone, it would have meant that many of the “golden nuggets” that people gave us would have been lost because they would be considered statistically insignificant – and that was something that we definitely did not want to see happen. After all, only one or two people mentioned the idea of putting a bike-rack on the Town’s buses. This, we think, is an excellent idea, and it would be tragic if initiatives of this nature got lost in a statistical void.

So, consider that this document is based on the study of a living, breathing, thing known as community and bear in mind that we have attempted to reproduce something of that organic quality in this document. Once you see what we’ve done we think you will be pleased with the format and understand our rationale for adopting this strategy.
Blueprint: General Issues Affecting the Future of Collingwood

Introduction

To say that Collingwood is in the midst of an unprecedented period of growth and change would be an understatement. To put it simply and bluntly, there is a lot going on in and around this community.

As was discussed earlier, Vision 2020 was struck to look at growth issues affecting the Town and its citizens. Without providing a flood of numbers and other raw data, this section will briefly consider some of the leading drivers of change within the Town. There are a great number of differing data sets that could have been included here; however, for the sake of brevity, we will limit ourselves at present. Principally, the statistical and demographic trends contained herein relate to:

- population change
- housing stock
- employment figures
- manufacturing and commercial data
- tourism-related development
- the effect of large developments such as Intrawest

Each of these will be touched upon in turn.

Population

- Collingwood’s permanent and part-time population base of 1999 was 21,500. Despite the downturn in Canada’s economy in the early ‘90’s, Collingwood has grown steadily over the past decade, and increased its population by approximately 3,000 residents (up from 18,500 -- 13,500 permanent plus 5,000 part-time) in 1991.

- Referring to the present Town of Collingwood Official Plan Update our projected population (both permanent and part-time) is estimated to be approximately 30,357 by the year 2021, an increase of 8,860 residents.

Housing

- In resort communities across North America the availability affordable housing is the number one issue facing both the resort and its neighboring municipalities.

- Our housing figures indicate that Collingwood currently has 8,141 housing units. Based on anticipated population growth, at 2.5 persons per unit we will require an additional 3,700 housing units in this municipality to accommodate our growth to year 2021.

- These projections must be considered along side a current rental housing vacancy rate of less than a 2%.

- There is a shortage of available rental stock, affordable or otherwise. Often times there are less than 10 apartments available (bachelor to three bedroom) at any one time. As with housing, the shortage of available stock causes an artificial inflation of rental costs which, in turn, reduces the overall number of people who can live affordably in Town.

Employment

- Currently the Collingwood area has a 5.3% unemployment rate compared to the Provincial average of 5.8% and the National average of 7.1%.

- According to 1999 estimates, the average annual income levels in Collingwood were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Average in 1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Male Income</td>
<td>$33,682</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Female Income</td>
<td>$20,062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Household Income</td>
<td>$47,930</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Blueprint: General Issues Affecting the Future of Collingwood

- Our 1999 manufacturing Sector Strategy identified that 65% of Collingwood’s manufacturing workers reside outside of town. Our Manufacturing Sector alone has identified the need for an additional 800 new employees over the next 5 years resulting from proposed industrial expansion.

- Industry has identified the shortage of skilled labour in this community as a key concern affecting industrial growth and development.

- Collingwood currently has less than a 2% rental housing vacancy rate. This means that when industry expands and increases their employee base – they must do so by attracting their potential employees from outside the area, due to the shortage of skilled labour. We are, however, unable to offer these future employees affordable housing once they arrive.

- Our manufacturing and commercial sectors represent in excess of 37% of Collingwood’s total tax base. We need to ensure growth and retention within this sector in order to afford our residents a tax base that is lower than municipalities without as strong a manufacturing and commercial sector.

**INTRAWEST**

Earlier this year, KPMG on behalf of Intrawest, produced an Economic Impact Analysis Study that looked at the effect of the company’s new Blue Mountain Resort Village.

- According to the study, the Village at Blue Mountain will increase the number of visitors to Blue Mountain dramatically – moving it upwards from approximately 650,000 annual visits to somewhere in the area of 2 million annual visits when the Village is completed.

- When completed, the resort will yield a total of 3,595 jobs in the (full-year equivalent) “Resort Operations” category.

- At the same time, Intrawest has not made provisions for employee housing part of their resort development plans. This means that workers at the resort will be forced to locate affordable housing in the region.

- Vision 2020 estimates that it is likely that a high number of these 3,595 jobs will pay less than $12.00/hr., meaning that resort workers will likely be utilizing rental stock in the region, including Collingwood

* * * * *

These bulleted points are intended to act as a quick primer on some of the key issues affecting the future of the Town. Additional facts and figures will be introduced at later stages of the report.
Distilling 15,000 – 18,000 ideas and thousands of pages of research and notes has resulted in the hundreds of recommendations contained in this report.

But what values lie at the core of these dreams? What are the “guiding principles” we are seeking?

In order to answer these questions, the Committee undertook two processes: one was to understand what factors define quality of life. The other was to categorize each and every recommendation under the framework of a core value.

As a result, we can consider that **Quality of Life** is defined by:

- having enough local parks and public recreation opportunities
- average lot and house prices and/or rents are at an affordable level based on prevailing wage rates in the area
- there is community diversity that comes from a full range of civic services, shops and job opportunities.
- the environment is treated with respect
- traffic is at safe and manageable levels
- a sense of neighbourhood and shared community values exists
- the cost of living is met with normal growth in incomes.

### Eight Core Values for Collingwood

1. As a community tucked into the centre of a region brimming with natural amenities, Collingwood is a stable, diversified and year-round community that strikes a balance between industry, commerce and recreation, allowing it to function as the service and economic hub for the greater area.

2. All initiatives, policies, decisions and directions of the town are for the benefit of the residents and other visitors alike and further, they are always considered in conjunction with the regional context and other affected agencies or bodies.

3. Collingwood understands that a shared community vision is best realized when communication with residents, visitors and the world beyond is regular, consistent, meaningful and participatory.

4. Collingwood continually seeks to de-emphasize a strong dependence on vehicles and moves toward being a more pedestrian friendly, walkable town with a human scale.

5. Collingwood respects, maintains, strengthens and promotes its cherished and unique heritage.

6. The waterfront is the soul of the community and is its single most important asset. It is visible, accessible, and clean and all development on or near to it respects the Town of Collingwood’s core values and its vision.

7. Collingwood is a good steward of its natural assets and continually improves its reputation as an environmentally sustainable and responsible community.

8. Growth and change are consistently monitored, evaluated and understood with new and creative solutions continually being sought and applied in a fiscally responsible manner that capitalizes on opportunities and manages challenges.
PART TWO
September 15, 2020.

This is my favourite day of the year. Gateway Day. It’s not officially a holiday. The shops stay open, and there is a skeleton staff at Town Hall and the banks. But the schools close at noon, and most businesses shut down early. A goodly portion of Collingwood turns out at Gateway Park to watch the fireworks, the Sailing Boat Opera and…well, there’s stuff going on all day. Gateway Day isn’t for tourists. That’s why we hold it during the week in September. It’s for us, the people of this Town. It was started about ten years ago. It’s sort of like our own Academy Awards show. We honour volunteers who have made contributions, we commemorate the hard work that people from across the community have put in to make this town what it is today...and we generally just party! We celebrate what we accomplished by working together, because we did it better than just about any other community in Ontario. And it got us on the cover of Maclean’s Magazine.

In 2009, Maclean’s Magazine named Collingwood Canada’s Town of the Year, and applauded it for its all-encompassing vision:

“It is a spectacular blend of past, present and future. From its new-technology manufacturing sectors to its proud ship-building past, from its carefully-restored heritage buildings to its modern theatre, from its boutiques to its dollar stores, from its water side parks to its subtle signage, this is a town in tune with itself, comfortable in its present state, yet ever evolving as if it were a single living organism. It is a town with a plan. It knows where it’s going. As a visitor, one is drawn back year after year, just to watch it change, just to see what’s new. As a visitor one is always welcome here, but citizenry is like a secret membership: People who live here, even the municipal politicians, share some kind of common mindset. They’re like happy worker ants and the queen they serve is the Town itself.”

If a community is to be successful, it must have long term goals. Visioning determines how long term goals are to be accomplished. But it is the citizenry of a community who must decide what those goals are, and it is the responsibility of municipal governments to adhere to the wishes of the people they represent. Few communities realise long term goals, in part because they don’t take the time or make the effort to go to the people and identify its wants and needs.

In the year 2000, Collingwood took the time and made the effort to do so, and the people responded in numbers far, far exceeding anyone’s expectations. The public had, in fact, thrown down the gauntlet and said to the politicians, “Let’s do this thing carefully and properly. Let’s work together, politicians and citizens, as one. Let’s suspend personal agendas and work towards the goals that we have identified. Let’s transform ourselves from a very good community into an even greater one...into Ontario’s finest community. Let’s show the province, the country and the world what planning is all about.”

I remember all that. There was a bit of a hubbub initially, but in the year 2000 the elected Council bought into the visioning plan and things finally got started in the spring of 2001. No small feat when you think about it. Thinking back, I really have to admire that council. It takes a lot of commitment to really and truly dedicate yourself to something, knowing you’ll probably be out of office long before it’s finished...that it’s never really finished. But they did it, and set an example for the councils that followed. And it got us on the cover of Maclean’s Magazine.
Introduction

Supreme Rulers expressed many sentiments that could be compressed into the following statements of what Collingwood should be:

- A blended community
- Respectful of heritage in all its forms (rural, shipbuilding, small town values)
- Forward looking
- Aesthetically pleasing
- Respectful of the environment
- Well-planned and marketed

They desire a municipal government that is

- Open
- Accountable
- Communicates well with its citizenry.

Each of these points will be discussed in turn, along with a small but representative sample of the feedback that was received in the Supreme Ruler survey and the Community Visioning Workshops. Verbatim statements such as these are an extremely useful way of understanding the intrinsic nature of the above terms and the role they play in people’s dreams for the future.

A Blended Community

A leading desire of survey respondents was to have a blended community. The terms “blend” and “mix” were explicitly used by 94 respondents, but the values associated with creating a diverse community extended, in some way or another, across almost all responses, regardless of age. A blend, in this respect, means, simply, diversity. In other words, the majority of respondents do not want an “exclusive” community. However, it should be noted that the idea of a blended community is, itself, a heterogeneous concept – in other words, a “blend” means different things to different people. This “blend of blends” includes:

- A blend of architectural styles
- A blend of tourism and industry
- A blend of culture and nature
- A blended demographic (a healthy and sustainable diversity of age groups, income levels and ethnic backgrounds)
- A better “blend” in terms of shopping
- A blend of “small town” with urban convenience.

Devising a way for the Town of Collingwood to balance this diversity has been a chief aim of the Blueprint Collingwood report. A large number of recommendations have been proposed throughout the course of this document. However, there are three general recommendations that we wish to include at this point:
Ensure that the Town incorporates the values associated with a “blended community” into any and all planning initiatives.

Continue to research issues surrounding the needs of Collingwood’s different demographic populations, particularly in matters relating to particular age groups such as youth and retirees.

Encourage a Town-wide beautification strategy that provides guidance for all infrastructure improvement - utility hydro-lines, urban forestry, greenery, mandated trails, entrance-points, etc.

What Community Meant to Community Visioning Workshop Participants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation, Working Together</td>
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<td>Family and Friends</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharing and Caring</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic Area</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe, Clean and Green</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect and Responsibility</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job, Livelihood</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services, Education</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respectful of Our Heritage

Heritage is a term that wears many different masks. It can be found equally in the Town’s still-vibrant rural economy and it appears in the guise of revitalized shop-front facades on Hurontario Street. Heritage is our history and the murals that honour it. It is the shipbuilding and the museum that archives the many tools and diverse histories that made the area what it is today. Scratch a little, and “heritage” suddenly tells of earlier economies as well as the Petun and Huron nations whose peoples criss-crossed our present-day Town and called this area home. (Prior to the coming of the Iroquois, the Huron and Petun were front runners in envisioning a more “regional” aspect to the southern Georgian Bay region.)

In discussing their overall vision for Collingwood, survey respondents felt strongly that the Town should maintain its heritage element. Of course, heritage, like the notion of a “blend” meant different things to different people. Some of the different means of understanding heritage include:

Small Town 44 Respondents

The idea of Collingwood retaining its “small town” values was seen as an important element across different age groups.

Respondents expressed concern about the Town growing “too big too fast.” A number of respondents felt that it was imperative that the Town work to maintain its existing “small town feel” – as exemplified by a combination of heritage and cultural elements. With this in mind, growth was not seen as a bad thing; however, it was something that respondents felt should be encouraged with an eye to doing so at a reasonable, measured and strategically beneficial pace. With the exception of two respondents, Supreme Ruler survey participants expressed a high degree of support for what they termed as the “small town feel” of Collingwood. This is illustrated in the following quotes by respondents:

“What attracted me to Collingwood was the small town feeling yet with conveniences. Keep the old town feel and enhance it.”

“I think we can keep Collingwood looking and feeling like the small town it has been without hindering progress and development”

Determine an optimum sustainable population for the Town of Collingwood.
Rural 26 Respondents

A percentage of respondents made mention of the Town’s rural heritage. Interestingly, many of these comments came from the under 18 age group.

All of these respondents presented comments that were favorable to the preservation of the Town’s agrarian roots. The following comment is indicative of these responses:

“I would hate to see the rural aspect of Collingwood change, just for the simple fact that ... farms are becoming less and less to make room for new subdivisions

▲ Establish urban limits/boundaries to avoid urban sprawl and to create a separation between built and natural environments.

Historical Elements 155 Respondents

Many survey respondents drew attention to the Town’s history by commenting favourably on the community’s cultural past, its architecture, its shipbuilding heritage and the overall “look and feel” of the Town. Of the 155 responses that were received that mentioned historical elements, a full 95% of respondents had a vision of the Town’s future that included existing heritage issues and, indeed, were favourable to them. A very tiny fraction (3%) of responses contained negative references to the Town’s history and heritage elements.

Something to Think About...

Mention Collingwood’s heritage and most people think of the obvious historical markers – the Shipyards, or the Town’s historic buildings. But there’s another form of heritage that has been in decline for several decades now: the ma and pa convenience store. Such stores used to be a fixture in many neighbourhoods, and fulfilled a social, as well as practical function. Now they only exist in small numbers. Why not try to encourage more of these stores? Not only are they better for the community, but they can also be pretty good for the environment because it’s only ever a five minute walk to the milk store!

▲ Allow zoning for the development of convenience stores in residential areas to eliminate the need for using cars.

Aesthetically Pleasing

Respondents to the Supreme Ruler survey as well as participants in the Community Visioning Workshops expressed a desire that the Collingwood of the future be an aesthetically pleasing one. The “Look” of the Town was seen as a key component in the Town’s overall well-being. This assertion surfaces throughout survey responses and factors in with a range of theme issues, such as transportation (beautifying the Harbourlands), housing (ensuring the need for...
property standards), and the Downtown core, to name a few.

“I would like Collingwood to be considered one of Canada’s beautiful destinations for people 20 years from now. We have the basis - the lake, the mountains and the land. The only thing that can mess this up is us.”

Respectful of the Environment

Values associated with the Town’s (and Region’s) environment were quite pronounced throughout Vision 2020’s Supreme Ruler Survey and Community Visioning Workshops. In addition to a question specifically relating to the environment, there were numerous comments made throughout the survey that relate to the natural heritage of Collingwood and the surrounding area. In the Overall Vision response, approximately 97% of respondents who mentioned the environment made some form of affirmation relating to environmental matters. A number of respondents mentioned green spaces (61), parks (38), Trees (35) or nature (7) or wildlife (5) or a range of other environmentally-related terms and descriptors, such as natural features in the area – the mountain, the water, flowers and so on. A more developed statistical breakdown of environmental issues is contained later in the report.

Forward Thinking

At the same time as citizens value the historical elements of Collingwood there is a competing – though not necessarily contradictory – desire for the Town to be “forward thinking.” This term is a bit nebulous and carries with it a number of connotations. Perhaps the best way to classify such connotations is to say that they represent a desire to see the Town adopt a proactive stance towards the future – and not be afraid to embrace newer elements of technology, style and other “ways of seeing.”

To some respondents, it also meant seeing the Town adopt a more “urban” or “modern” attitude.

![Demographic Breakdown](chart)

It is interesting to note the demographic breakdown of these figures, compared to those individuals speaking in favor of the Town’s historical elements. One might be tempted to assume that these are diametrically opposing wishes on the part of (largely) differing demographic segments. What is interesting to note though, at least in terms of those respondents who desired the inclusion of an “urban” or “modern” element in Collingwood, is that approximately 40%
Striking a balance between the Town’s history and its requirements for the future (including the need to be regionally, provincially and globally competitive) requires well thought out planning. The Town is encouraged to ensure that the Official Plan explicitly attempts to continually strive to balance heritage with forward thinking.

Well Planned and Marketed

A community is, by nature, an organic entity. And in some ways, it can be said to have a life of its own. There is, at the same time, a need for centralized planning to ensure the well being and long term sustainability of the community as a whole.

There is a growing awareness of the need for communities and their governments to develop comprehensive long-range plans. Comprehensiveness in this respect means integrating a whole range of issues (such as transportation, housing, environment, etc.) into community development and urban planning projects.

In addition to long-range planning, there is the need to measure growth and change in the community using a variety of means. Such measuring allows the government to remain “in tune” with the needs of its citizenry at all times, and in many different ways.

There are numerous different ways that the sustainability of a community (including its growth and development) can be measured. To best understand its own sustainability, Collingwood, like any Town, has to devise and utilize measuring tools that are appropriate to the community at large.

Finally, it is imperative for the community at large that an efficient communications program be in place to market Collingwood outside of the community – be it at the village at Blue Mountain, or in the larger Provincial, national, or even international context.

- Establish a Town of Collingwood presence in the new Village at Blue Mountain as part of an over-all marketing strategy.

- Ensure that a range of tools is used to efficiently market Collingwood.

- Develop a specific strategy to proactively solicit hi-tech clean and sustainable industry to the Community. Ensure strategy includes goals, measurement, follow-up and accountability (performance indicators).
Governance

An indirect result of Vision 2020’s research was the realization that people are concerned about a range of issues associated with government. These include Mayor and Council, municipal staff, the allocation of tax-payer dollars and, in this latter respect, the notion of getting “value for one’s money” as a taxpayer.

In principle, the Committee believes that citizens of Collingwood do not have a problem with the role or presence of government in the community. Rather, there are particular issues about government that are of concern. The following quote is an example of this:

“Our present council has us in a park position... DO something with CSL and our waterfront –it is an embarrassment. ... Be more open with taxpayers.”

Within the Community Visioning Workshops there were also a number of comments made by participants that suggest some degree of dissatisfaction with particular elements of governance. This is particularly the case when it comes to the idea of an “open” government (i.e. one that communicates well with its people), or, alternately, a proactive one (i.e. this latter comment was expressed – as with the above quote – with respect to Harboulrlands development).

At the same time, a number of respondents and workshop participants took the time to credit the Town’s government with a number of initiatives – parks, trails, the museum, as well as their initiative in soliciting input for the future. This contradiction in opinions is not necessarily out of sinc with more general societal perceptions of governance. After all, people in general seem to enjoy something of a “love/hate” relationship with politicians and, to a lesser degree, civil servants. Having said that, Vision 2020 believes that relations with citizens could be tightened in a number of ways – through better communications, (and inversely, through better listening), effective use of volunteerism, inclusiveness, and most immediately, with pro-activity in respect to implementing the People’s Vision.

Especially in this latter respect, it is clear, the municipal government of the Town of Collingwood must play a central role in implementing the People’s Vision for the Town of Tomorrow. Citizens are counting on government to do more than merely solicit opinions. They are counting on action of substance.

This was supported by the findings of the Rhythm Communications Report – which, amongst other things, highlighted the fact that a large number of people felt that Mayor and Council were key drivers in implementing the People’s Vision.

| Community Visioning Workshop Question 51. Please name the organizations or individuals who will be important participants in making your visions become a reality? |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Town Council    | 56.5%           | Citizens        | 28.7%           |
| Business        | 25.9%           | Community Organizations | 18.5%       |
| The Mayor       | 17.6%           | Environmental Groups | 17.6%       |
| Local Councils  | 13.9%           | Provincial Government | 13.9%       |
| Intrawest, Other Developers | 13.0%       | Town staff       | 12.0%           |
| Committees      | 10.2%           |

There are a number of ways in which elements of governance can be sharpened to attend to these various concerns. General recommendations are followed by recommendations relating to Communications and Marketing.

▲ The municipality is a $30 million dollar corporation. It should be broken into business units with annual performance-based goals, reporting, budgeting and accountability by unit. The option of “contracting out” (outsourcing) should not be ruled out.
▲ Restructure the Planning Committee to include members of the public.

▲ Examine the costs associated with turning existing part-time by-law enforcement job to a full-time position with increased hours so as to better enforce by-laws.

▲ Where fiscally responsible consider increasing number of municipal staff in planning department and elsewhere as needed. Investigate the possibility of job-sharing initiatives in this respect.

▲ Establish a community monitoring program to measure change and predict needs. USE APPROPRIATE INDICATORS

▲ With respect to the municipal tendering process, using local firms should come second to a given firm's ability to offer creative solutions that fit the Town's overall vision for the future.

Communications

▲ Ensure that keeping the new Town website up to date is a priority. Ensure that the Internet and other emerging technologies are used as effective means to communicate both to, and with citizens.

▲ Send quarterly newsletters to every household (including tenanted units) with easy-to-read municipal updates via mail or Internet with readily accessible means for response.

▲ Hold informal, participatory and open “Town Hall” meetings for the public 3-4 times per year to discuss issues and promote shared values and visions between civic leaders and residents.

▲ Make businesses more aware of tools available to them for upgrading, be it training dollars, grants, loans - building enhancement programs, town services, etc.

▲ Implement current, state-of-the-art technology into the Town Hall systems, including an intranet, on-line financial transactions (service, parking ticket payments, etc.) and applications (downloadable forms).

Marketing

▲ In co-operation with the Chamber of Commerce and other community organizations, make the “Station” a central box office for all area events and attractions.

▲ Develop a regional marketing strategy with other municipal and relevant business or organization partners.

▲ Develop a strong, comprehensive and adequately financed local marketing strategy that includes programming for special events and cultural/arts venues, website, signage, visitor evaluation and follow-up, concierge services and customer service.
In the past decade, there have been several enhancements to the regional transportation initiatives that were put in place at the turn of the Millennium. For certain, the Town has made good on its promise to make Collingwood pedestrian friendly, to reduce the need for cars in the core areas.

Ironically, the circular driveway of the Town’s museum, The (railway) Station, has become something of a terminus for our community’s buses. There have been considerable improvements to the roads. Sidewalks have been laid and all of the key corridors into Town have been dramatically re-engineered in a successful attempt to produce transportation routes that are both efficient and aesthetically pleasing. Our efforts at beautification have had a tremendous affect - in particular Hume Street, the Parkway and First Street - in terms of giving visitors to Collingwood a sense of driving into something warm and inviting.

During the summer, these roadways are awash with colour thanks to the brilliant swathes of wildflowers that have been planted. Power lines have been buried, replaced by treed boulevards. Streets are shared, and a steady increase in cycling and roller-blading has meant an increase in the number and quality of bike-lanes and paved trails.

The passage down First Street is nothing less than a transformation from its old days at the turn of the Century. Stores were encouraged to use signage that reflects our Heritage Ontario look. Late night chain-store back lighting gave way to softer, neon-free spot lighting.

Approaching Hurontario Street from the west, drivers encounter one of two traffic circles that maintain a steady flow of traffic at a consistent pace. Instead of the “stop and go” of the previous traffic lights, the Town’s roundabouts have reduced the amount of automotive emissions and have made getting from one end of Collingwood to the other much, much easier.

There is more: After upgrading some of the Town’s secondary arteries, a well-signed route at the south end of town has alleviated much of the through-town traffic, in particular trucks and other commercial traffic.

Downtown parking has ceased to be a problem. The free transit passes that have become standard issue for retail and commercial employees have eliminated a calculable number of vehicles from our main streets. Well-signed parking lots have alleviated further parking problems.

Last but not least, the revitalized waterfront area has been car-free since its ribbon cutting. Footpaths and boardwalks connect the new boutiques and cafes, while circular cul-de-sacs at the north end of all the tree-named streets provide a park ‘n walk entry-point to the Gateway to Georgian Bay.
**Issues**

There are a number of issues that relate to matters of transportation and traffic management, a number of which have been noted in the recent Traffic Management Study conducted by the Town.

These issues include:

- The need for a comprehensive policy on traffic and transportation management
- A perceived lack of available parking in the Downtown area
- The need to maintain a satisfactory flow of transportation through and around Town
- The need to re-examine the role of public transport in Collingwood
- The need to ensure that transportation issues are dealt with in a way that is environmentally friendly
- The pressing need to develop regional and tourist transportation initiatives
- Certain key corridors are unsightly and unattractive. There is a need to beautify key transportation corridors (i.e. Hume Street, First Street) and community gateways
- The need to definitively address the “by-pass” issue
- The need to upgrade services (including road quality, sidewalks, etc.)
- The need for an overall policy on the planning of all future traffic initiatives so that they reflect the overall goals of the community as it relates to the Town as a whole
- The need to better allocate transportation dollars so that they best serve the needs of the community
- The pressing need to develop regional and tourist transportation initiatives
- Certain key corridors are unsightly and unattractive. There is a need to beautify key transportation corridors (i.e. Hume Street, First Street) and community gateways
- The need to definitively address the “by-pass” issue
- The need to upgrade services (including road quality, sidewalks, etc.)

**The Need for A Comprehensive Policy for Transportation**

Transportation, like each of the “theme” issues dealt with in this report is the type of subject that requires an all encompassing set of planning criteria so as to utilize a broad and consistent set of standards. Currently, roads and throughways have to meet engineering (and Town) standards for safety and efficiency. Other issues – such as environmental and aesthetic considerations – are not applied with any degree of uniformity. However, a masterplan that forged consistency in this respect would aid in the implementation of the People’s Vision, ensuring that issues beyond safety and efficiency play a part in shaping the way traffic matters are handled.

▲ Develop a traffic strategy that takes into account, not just individual components of traffic issues, but the relationship of these issues to a larger picture. A plan of this nature could take into account the following possibilities when undertaking traffic-related initiatives:

- burying utility-lines
- integrating traffic calming programs
- adding treed islands
- ensuring appropriate and efficient signage
- highlighting aesthetic design elements
- adding to the Town’s cultural elements
- ensuring that traffic-flow is efficient, but not at the expense of the Town’s overall vision for the future

**Roads - Bypass**

Vision 2020 received a tremendous number of responses related to the network of roads that wind their way through and around the community. Key issues here concerned the following:

- A bypass
- Road-widening
- First Street
- Beautification
The by-pass issue itself was the central concern, and an exceptionally large number of people (176) made mention of the possibility of a bypass. Supreme Rulers responded quite favorably to the notion of by-pass. Over 90% of people who mentioned the issue, did so in a manner to suggest some degree of support for this type of solution, as exemplified by the following enthusiastic comments on the issue:

“BYPASS, BYPASS, BYPASS... it's absolutely necessary in order to adequately move some of the traffic through and around town.”

However, this high support for the issue must be taken with a note of caution, for it should not be taken as an automatic endorsement of ring road around Collingwood. Bypasses come with many different issues attached to them.

The idea of a by-pass meant many different things to respondents. At one extreme, to some people, it meant an ambitious re-routing of Hwy. 26 around the Town. To others it meant a short-loop around Collingwood that would allow tourists and other visitors to the Mountain to circumvent the Town. Still others conceived of a by-pass that would be used by commercial traffic (e.g. trucks) only. Another group of Supreme Rulers felt that a by-pass was best achieved by modifying (i.e. widening) outlying roads such as Poplar Side Road, and Osler Bluff Road, and improving existing infrastructure for tourists and residents alike.

Based on our study of traffic issues in Town and elsewhere, we believe that a by-pass must be considered as a strategy for traffic management that follows, rather than proceeds other attempts to solve transportation issues. Our assessment of the by-pass issue leads us to conclude that what Supreme Rulers really want, first and foremost, is a solution to traffic congestion rather than a highway for people to circumvent Collingwood altogether.

Roads - First Street

Currently, the “Grand Avenue” through Collingwood suffers a range of issues spanning the aesthetic to the functional. Difficulties in making left hand turns off of the road caused survey respondents to express frustration at the delays this posed to the flow of traffic along First Street -- especially during peak periods when on-coming traffic prevented quick and efficient turns and caused traffic to back-up. Given the retail mix on First Street, this would seem to be a priority area for traffic management. Our findings here concur with those of the Town’s Traffic Study Group. What varies, however, are the solutions we recommend.

Vision 2020 believes that the main through-fare is in need of both lane widening and beautification. However, we advocate considerable prudence in this area, since we believe that the First Street corridor must be developed in such a way as to reflect the values of the community as a whole.

Investigate the widening of First Street -- but investigate alternatives to the creation of a uniform 5-lane road.
Support the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan to visually enhance the street. Consider adopting portions of the Parker/Stenton recommendations in this respect.

Retain a traffic calming expert to investigate the planning of First Street, particularly with respect to advance lights, islands, turn-arrow-lights, roundabouts and functional beautification.

Roads – Gateways and Other Key Corridors

In addition to the number of comments that were made in relation to the by-pass issue, there were a variety of comments made by survey respondents that dealt with other road related issues. There is a considerable sense amongst respondents that we must act now to head off any future traffic-related problems. If the Town is growing, and if projects such as the Village at Blue Mountain will dramatically increase the number of visitors to the Town, then solutions must be developed today. In other words, Supreme Rulers favour a proactive and preventative approach to traffic management, rather than a reactionary approach that might be “too little, too late.”

A key sentiment in this respect is the need for improvements to key roads/corridors in Town. Improvements in this sense, means both aesthetic and functional developments to both the actual road and, more broadly, the area immediately around the road. One thing that must be encouraged in this respect is a move away from thinking that roads start and finish with asphalt. Referring back to the idea of a transportation master-plan, Vision 2020 would encourage a broader view of roads that would see them treated not just as the paved (or not paved) surface that you drive on, but also the visual environment that you drive through at the same time.

Having said that, the functionality of key routes, as well as their associate aesthetic element, needs to be reviewed and upgraded. We concur with Supreme Rulers who suggested the following areas for attention: Sixth Street, Pretty River Parkway, Huron Street, Mountain Road and, to ease some of the traffic congestion through the Town, outlying streets such as Poplar Side Road, Grey Road 19, and Airport Road.

Develop aesthetically sensible “gateways” into Town – Hwy 26 (east and west) and Hwy 24, and that the provisions of OPA 37 for greenspace development near Mountain Road be expanded to other entrance points so as to ensure a consistent visual and functional improvement.

Upgrade and beautify certain routes - Hume St., Mountain Road, Poplar Side Road

ROAD-WIDENING -Vision 2020 recommends that key routes - such as Mountain Road, Sixth Street, Osler Bluff Road, Poplar Side Road, etc. - be considered for possible widening for use as alternative transportation routes... and that these routes be promoted as such. Vision 2020 recommends that this strategy be part of an overall plan to better manage existing transportation infrastructure (versus the development of new roads)

Parking
Parking proved to be a significant topic for Supreme Ruler respondents. 186 survey respondents identified parking-related issues as a concern. Principally, concerns can be broken down into a few key areas:

- The belief that there is insufficient parking – either in the Town as a whole or in particular areas, such as Hurontario Street – and that more parking would be a good thing.
- The sentiment that meters on the main street are not a good thing – that they inhibit business and / or deter tourists from wanting to shop in Collingwood. Respondents who discussed meters typically proposed that the Town “get rid of them.”
- Angled Parking on Hurontario was seen in a mixed light – some respondents liked angled parking, while others felt it awkward and troublesome.
- Parking garages were proposed as one means to handle the need for sufficient parking. Again, the topic proved to yield mixed feelings. Some respondents felt that multi-level garages were not necessary, and that the Town should concentrate on ensuring that there was a sufficient number of lots similar to the ones on Pine Street and Ste. Marie Street. Other respondents, some begrudging the issue, felt that multi-tier lots or underground lots were the way to go.

A small percentage of respondents (7 out of 186) expressed concern that there was sufficient parking around Town, and what was really needed was a way to ensure that it was used as efficiently as possible – i.e. by customers and not store-owners.

Vision 2020’s research into the Town’s parking situation leads us to propose a number of solutions. First, however, a number of considerations. With 1800 parking spaces downtown, the ratio of parking spaces to cars in Collingwood is actually one of the highest in Ontario. Therefore, contrary to many survey respondents, Vision 2020 believes that there is not so much a shortage of parking in the Town, as there is an inefficient management of existing parking resources. Furthermore, Vision 2020 believes that this inefficient management of parking is linked to larger transportation issues in Town. For example, with an average cost of 50 cents per hour, parking meters are currently less than one third of the price of a single-fare public transit ticket, not to mention significantly more convenient.

Currently, there is no incentive for employees who work downtown to keep their car at home. This being said, there is reason to believe that a good number of cars occupying Hurontario Street and the municipal lots belong to store owners and their employees, thus reducing the available stock for shoppers, tourists and visitors to the Town.

An additional problem lays in the fact that there is insufficient signage to direct tourists and visitors to the municipal lots. Additional signage could potentially help to free up spaces on the main street.

Vision 2020 also differs from Supreme Rulers on the matter of parking meters. If our goal as a community is to develop a pedestrian orientation with an increased reliance of alternative modes of transport, then parking meters serve as a deterrent to vehicle usage and should be maintained.

- Provide free bus and/or municipal lot passes to downtown employees (1800 spots/1600 employees!)
- Undertake to improve the current situation by encouraging public transit, creating more pedestrian-friendly elements, encouraging use of municipal lots (free passes), and by installing better signage to direct people to existing municipal lots.
- Investigate alternatives to above-ground parking garages – such as underground lots or other, more aesthetically sensible alternatives.
Public Transport

Public transit usage in Collingwood has been in decline for a number of years. There are a number of possible explanations for this, ranging from an increase in fare costs, to ease and access of other forms of transportation, to negative connotations associated with having to “take the bus.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Ridership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>68,684</td>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>59,744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.50 (July)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>45,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.75 (June)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>36,608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>38,608</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>21,863 (to 8/25)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32,794 (prjctd)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Colltrans – with the exception of 2000 projected ridership which was calculated by Vision 2020 using a formula based on the number of transit riders per month.

Despite this, support for public transit in one form or another was very high amongst survey respondents, most notably in the under-18 age category. Only one survey respondent registered any negative feedback about public transport. This compared to 153 respondents whose comments were favorable to buses and other forms of public transit (e.g. trolleys or trams).

Based on our additional research on the issue, Vision 2020 believes that public transit must play a far more significant role in Collingwood if the community is going to achieve its vision of the future. Not only can public transport be used to alleviate other traffic issues, but it can also be used to foster a greater sense of regionalism while also helping the Town’s tourist (and related) economy to remain vibrant and competitive in light of developments such as the Village at Blue Mountain. Indeed, Vision 2020 believes that the development of the Village, as well as the growing need to re-position Collingwood as the hub of the Georgian Triangle region, both give rise to the need to develop transportation links to other areas.

The Committee therefore submits the following recommendations:

▲ Investigate the increased and possibly the eventual complete subsidization of public transit, along with greater promotion and publication of public transport (bus) routes.
To complement increased usage of bicycle transportation, investigate the possibility of fitting in-town and regional busses with bike-racks.

Develop a regional bus route with shared responsibility between Collingwood and neighbouring communities. Ensure that developing a link with the Village at Blue Mountain is a priority for this.

Develop better tourist transportation initiatives - investigate the use of a tram or trolley car loop around the community.

Numerous survey responses dealt with bike lanes and trails. 192 People commented on bike lanes, and all but two of them wrote in favor of (a) existing Town initiatives; or, (b) an improvement to these initiatives.

The following reflects the age breakdown of respondents writing on bike lanes. Interestingly, the demographic breakdown on trails, though based on a similar number of respondents, is slightly more favourable to the adult demographic – perhaps reflecting differing usage patterns on these two similar forms of alternative transportation.

Bike Lanes, Trails and Pedestrian Traffic

The development of bike lanes and trails are a relatively inexpensive and environmentally friendly means of tackling traffic and transportation issues around Collingwood. Not only that, but trails and bike lanes, as is to be expected, encourage car-free forms of transportation that also benefit the physical health of citizens.

Many people were vocal in their support of such car-less initiatives, as is illustrated by the following quote:
“Hurontario Street from First Street to Fourth Street, if practical, should be turned into a pedestrian mall... The main parts of downtown should be beautified - we have a nice start in the main street with the trees and brick sidewalks - but if this area were a pedestrian walkway - more trees, gardens, benches and sidewalk cafes could be added”

Vision 2020 believes that a greater sense of community can be developed through the development of car-less areas and the encouragement of alternative modes of transportation. We therefore submit the following recommendations:

▲ Mandate an increase to the number of bike lanes present in Collingwood - consider adopting a strategy to increase the number of bike lanes by a minimum number of kilometers each year

▲ Ensure that paved bike lanes and trails are mandatory in all new subdivisions and ensure that they are a non-negotiable component of all new developments.

▲ Actively promote bike lanes and bicycle transportation by ensuring additional bike lock posts around the Town.

▲ Investigate the possibility of a free “yellow-bike” program for use in Town.

▲ Complete the system of proposed trails and ensure that adequate links between public and private trails, bike lanes and other routes are developed, as well as connecting links to all new developments and to other communities.

▲ In addition to new trails, consider developing (at first) a limited number of paved trails.

▲ Support the provision of sidewalks and bike-lanes or trails on ALL in-town roads containing residential dwellings.

▲ Develop a comprehensive waterfront transportation plan as part of an overall plan for the waterfront.

Traffic Calming and Beautification

Aesthetic issues are central to the vision that our Committee is proposing for the future of the Town. We believe that, in future, all transportation corridors in and around Town must be able to function efficiently while being visually pleasing as well. These are two often-contrasting requirements. It is, however, interesting to note that in a number of cases – particularly with respect to traffic calming initiatives, both functionality and aesthetic matters are developed into a single comprehensive initiative in which traffic flow is maintained, speed is reduced, and efforts to beautify a street are enhanced. One good example is the intersection roundabout. Traffic circles blend function with aesthetics and, as well, come with the added benefit of being less costly and more environmentally efficient than a set of traffic lights.
In keeping with our effort to promote a sense of community, Vision 2020 feels that such possibilities must be looked at much more closely.

- Develop a comprehensive strategy to implement traffic calming and related initiatives around the Town. Priority areas for this Traffic calming should include First Street, High Street and areas around schools and parks.

- Investigate the possibility of traffic circles for key intersections around Town (such as First and High, Hume and Pretty River Parkway). Base any assessment on a variety of efficiencies related to cost, environment benefits and motion studies.

**Signage**

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, Vision 2020 supports the aims of the Signage Committee in developing a sign-related policy for the Town. The Committee feels, however, that there are certain areas related to transportation matters in which improvements could be made. This relates principally to the element of *functionality* present in the Town’s signs. What is needed is a greater number of more effective signs through which to mark various services and features of the Town, such as the Downtown, parking, bike-lanes, trails and new, as yet undeveloped, tourist and resident initiatives.

- Develop an enhanced signage policy to better deal with transportation issues including:
  - Better identify and promote usage of trails
  - Better identify and promote bike lanes
  - Better identify parking areas
  - Identify alternative routes for commercial traffic so as to avoid trucks, etc. in the downtown core
  - Create tourist-oriented walking tours (i.e. heritage walking tour)
  - Signs leading to Collingwood from outside of the town and region

**Airport and Rail Traffic**

With more and more people coming to Collingwood and the region, the availability of means other than cars to bring them here is something that needs to be reviewed. However, Vision 2020 feels that this issue needs to be considered alongside the Town’s other transportation priorities.

For example, all but one of 69 survey respondents who mentioned the airport felt that it was a good thing. Respondents felt that it could be expanded, or moved closer to the Town (or closer to the mountain). Many felt that it was needed to attract visitors to Collingwood and the area. However, currently there is a significant cost attached to maintaining the airport – a cost that is not seriously offset by any of the small number of users employing its services.

Balance this against the possibility of redirecting airport dollars into other initiatives – such as a regional bus service, increased in-Town public transit or a regular bus-link to Blue Mountain – and it becomes slightly less clear that the airport is as beneficial as respondents believe it is. Vision 2020
recognizes that the airport is an advantageous thing to have; however, we feel that it is essential that the airports fiscal self-sufficiency be established. We agree with the sentiments expressed by two other airport supporters who wrote:

“Let Intrawest pay their share for airport as they will benefit the most.”

“Airport could be a resource for other areas providing they are willing to help pay for it.”

The Committee also feels strongly that other options also need to be left open – such as the possibility of re-developing a passenger-rail link at some future point in time. We believe that, in this latter respect, it is important to make appropriate provisions for this possibility, regardless of how remote it seems at the present day.

Establish a deadline for the Airport to become a) regionally supported and b) self-sufficient; failing which, the airport should be sold/privatized and the (approximately $100,000.00) subsidization costs of the airport be re-directed into other transportation initiatives.

Retain a lot suitable for a new station. Consider the long-term possibility of rail transit for the Town.

I work here as an official Town greeter. Well, I don’t think of it as work, and they don’t pay me, but it’s my job as a volunteer to point out some of the highlights of Collingwood, the Gateway to Georgian Bay. And I’m proud to do that because, 20 years ago, if you were standing right here on Hurontario Street in front of the Federal Government Building, you would look north and never even know you were in the vicinity of a 6,000 square mile body of water. Hard to believe, but back then we were a town without a waterfront.

In the year 2001 Collingwood was already a green community with a fairly well developed urban forestry and beautification program, ensuring that nature and culture mixed well. But the downtown was a hodge-podge, architecturally. Still, a few visionary merchants had taken the lead and put their money where their shops were, fastidiously restoring the heritage elements of their century-old buildings. Then Town Council began a collective collaboration with most of the other merchants, who in turn made a concerted effort to do as much as possible to restore the town’s core to its former glory, resurrecting original brickwork and the vibrant colours of the various building facades to their original splendor. A grants-and-loans incentive program was introduced, signage and paint themes were harmonized, and big-name stores were challenged to open here under the strict building guidelines of a town with an action plan.

For a community of about 35,000 people, we now enjoy one of the finest retail mixes in Ontario. It is our reward for working hard to reverse the flow of shoppers to Barrie and Owen Sound. We sold big-name retailers on the idea of smaller, boutique-style outlets in the Ste. Marie, Hurontario and Pine Street corridors, and we promoted bigger versions of our own only-in-Collingwood specialty and value stores. Hurontario became a pedestrian-friendly outdoor mall that offered better prices on all of the trendy brand names that tourists paid a lot more for up at the ski resort, and everything else one would ever need, from groceries to hardware, from paint and paper to drugs and notions, from café au lait to streetdogs.

There is harmony now. Our Downtown retail area - spread as it is over Ste. Marie, Hurontario and Pine Streets - nicely compliments the new stores and commercial ventures that have sprung up on the waterfront and in the Town’s west end.

Would you like to take a pedestrian tour? Of what? Heritage homes, parks, culture? You won’t need a guide. Just grab one of these brochures and follow the coloured markers. How about Grand Avenue? There was a time, really, when it was called First Street that it was an eyesore – sort of an indigestion alley of fast food restaurants and gas stations. But now it’s more of a promenade. All of the electrical wires have been buried and there are trees and flowers and bike lanes and, where there were lights, we now have traffic circles.

Between Grand Avenue and Georgian Bay there’s the Gateway Park Boardwalk, and it runs along the shore from the west side resorts to Sunset Beach, almost three green kilometres in length. Looking east down the boardwalk you’ll see a remarkable-looking structure surrounded by trees and water. That’s the Collingwood Cultural Centre, home to the Town’s Art Gallery and Performance Live Theatre. If drama’s not your cup of tea the Centre’s Small Stage is hosting an eclectic mix of jazz, swing and classical music until the end of the month. That will be followed by a retrospective of rap music, which was very popular at the turn of the Century.

The Collingwood Cultural Centre won’t seat as many people as Carnegie Hall, but the architecture is award winning, the waterside setting unparalleled, the venues far-reaching and the acoustics nothing short of spectacular.
Goals / Key Principles

Vision 2020 believes that the Town must establish a set of principles/goals that will guide all future matters concerning the Downtown Area and all other Collingwood Attractions, such that they are:

- Affordable
- Attractive
- Green
- Culturally Rich
- Culturally Diverse
- Consumer-friendly
- Conscious of heritage
- Pedestrian friendly
Issues

There are several issues relating to both Downtown Collingwood and Collingwood Attractions. Though they may represent a diverse number of interests, these issues are, in one way or another, all interconnected. Consider:

- The need to accurately understand the role of both the downtown and attractions in general to Collingwood as a whole.
- The need for a dedicated cultural facility for the Town, such as an art gallery, theatre or performing arts centre.
- The means through which the Town can build upon its existing facilities.
- The need to radically re-think the role of public transit in Collingwood.
- The possible benefits of a pedestrian, car-free area in the Downtown.
- Beautification.
- Retail issues, including:
  - Perceived and real issues with retail mix, customer service and loss of retail dollars (leakage) to other shopping areas
  - Perceived shortage of parking
  - Shortage of retail / commercial space in the Downtown area
- A range of issues relating to the idea of the Downtown as a destination... The Downtown (indeed the Town as a whole) needs to be recognized as an attraction. This involves ensuring that there is a “human-scale” to development. It also means attending to heritage and aesthetic issues, marketing issues, signage, and more… …
- Parts of the Downtown heritage district are in need of revitalization and repair -- not to mention upgrades to allow for more residential and commercial space in the Downtown core.
- The need to promote a better understanding of the Collingwood environment (including the waterfront) and its role as a tourist attraction.
- Age related issues – for example, the needs of Collingwood's youth population and its specific -- and often ambiguous -- requirements.
- The need to proceed with well thought out development in the Western node

Each of these issues will now be addressed in more detail.

Defining the Downtown, Understanding Attractions

Vision 2020 feels that it is important the Town accurately understand the role that both the Downtown and other attractions play in Collingwood as a whole. There are a number of reasons for this:

- Issues that affect the Downtown and Attractions have an impact on the community at large
- Both are central to the way in which Collingwood is marketed in the region, across the Province, and internationally
- Both Downtown and Attractions act as key signatures – elements of Collingwood life that act as icons for the Town as a whole

In light of these and other points, Vision 2020 believes that there are several areas need to be addressed that will aid in clarifying these issues. The first involves a generic need to re-conceptualize what is meant by “downtown.” Related to this is a need to formalize the type of working relationships that the Town has with the various agencies that are involved with the Downtown – most notably Downtown Collingwood/BIA – so as to ensure consistency and equity in the shared ownership of key Downtown matters – such as beautification, urban forestry and more. Finally, it is imperative that the issue of
customer service be addressed more fully as it poses a concern for the long-term competitiveness of the Downtown.

In this latter respect, it is important to understand that customer service issues – which includes things like store hours, helpful staff and convenient offerings and price points – also relate to the overall marketing and sale-ability of Collingwood. At the same time, Vision 2020 believes that it will be one of the more difficult issues to tackle – primarily because of the difference in perceptions of service issues between Retailers and Customers.

In the past Tourism Intercept surveys have indicated that lack of customer service is an issue with customers – many of whom expressed concern about in-Town service levels. This is supported by a recent Retail Sector Survey conducted by Advisory Services in July 2000, which indicated that the number one way in which shoppers felt the Downtown could be improved was by attending to the improvement of Customer Service. The same survey, however, also indicated that retailers, contrary to this, felt that their levels of Customer Service were one of their key strengths.

- **Formally recognize the Downtown Core as being more than the current four-block designated area. Coordinate Downtown zoning / Downtown Collingwood/BIA areas to include the North side of First Street, as well as the southerly points bounded by Fifth Street/Hume Street. Consider extending C2 zoning to these streets.**

- **Ensure that the relationship (roles and responsibilities) between the Town and the Downtown Collingwood/BIA be formalized to ensure efficiency in matters of planning, capital expenditures and maintenance as they relate to shared initiatives.**

- **Make customer service a priority. Tools may include the use of “mystery shoppers”, training and incentives to employees who take training.**

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**Collingwood Cultural Centre and Other Needed Attractions**

Quite possibly the most vocal desire expressed by survey respondents and workshop participants was the need for certain key attractions. These attractions ranged from more restaurants and designer name shops, to more community-related facilities such as a second ice surface.

It was, however, the idea of an arts facility that seemed to capture people’s attention the most. A full **330 responses** were received on the subject, and all but a very tiny percent, expressed vocal enthusiasm for the idea. Of course, an arts facility meant different things to different people, and sometimes there were interesting deviations based on age. In general, however, Vision 2020 believes the development of one or more cultural facilities – such as an art gallery, theatre, bandshell, etc. – must be a top priority for the Town – both to enhance the Town and, by extension, to improve upon its position as a regional and provincial tourism destination. The breakdown of responses, by age and desired facility are contained in the following chart:
A breakdown of the total number of supporters for each type of facility is better illustrated by the following chart:

The following feedback we received on the subject of an arts facility is illustrative of this:

“A concert hall and arts centre should be built for concerts ... cultural activities such as ballets and stage plays.”

“We could certainly use a cultural centre ... We need a stage for our local theatre group also. This cultural centre should have an area in it for them as well."

“I think we should have a concert hall, where people would be able to go and have a chance to sit back and listen to the musicians. This would put a lot of excitement in the Town of Collingwood, because there would be famous people coming to perform in the concert hall. An art gallery would be a good idea too.”

“I think that Collingwood could benefit from a concert hall or an outdoor band shell.”

In addition to a cultural centre, other key suggestions involved the creation of a recreation centre. (30 respondents)

“I think we should have a recreation centre with a full size pool, ice rink and a cultural centre.”

Vision 2020 also supports this latter idea in principle; however we feel that it provides the appropriate opportunity to develop plans for an indoor facility or attraction (recreation-oriented or otherwise) that will serve the needs of residents and visitors year-round. We believe this would be useful for developing Collingwood as an all-season, all-weather destination.

▲ Initiate plans for the development of a multi-purpose cultural facility featuring a theatre, art gallery, entertainment and other like facilities. Investigate the possibility of (a) using existing facilities; (b) multiple facilities (i.e. separate art gallery, theatre, etc.); (c) partnering with private enterprise to develop the facility; (d) acquiring property for such facilities.

▲ Recommend the construction of an outdoor band-shell and stage as part of this endeavor, or as a separate exercise. Consider both of these options as being possible components of a waterfront development.

▲ Establish a long-range plan to develop non-weather related initiatives and attractions in Town. Proactively work to attract or develop an indoor, year-round recreation and entertainment attraction, facility or facilities.
Something to think about... Collingwood has had a summer market that didn’t seem to work. However, there may be valid reasons for this which can now be overcome. Markets can be enormously popular if planned well, and perhaps there is now a possibility for developing some as a stable summer-time attraction in Collingwood -- say in a park or other key location such as the Station grounds.

▲ Investigate the issues around the establishment of summer-time downtown market(s) (farmers market, book market, art market, or a schedule of different markets in the same venue). Ensure that issues surrounding competition with existing retail/cultural events are considered during the planning of this market.

Attractions – Existing Services

Survey respondents addressed three key areas with their comments on the expansion of existing services. 63 respondents commented that they would like to see a second ice surface in Town to alleviate what they felt was a shortage of available ice time.

“We need another ice surface. I do not mean a new arena to replace the Eddie Bush. We need another ice surface to practice on. I am speaking for figure skating and minor hockey mostly, but there are a lot of other users who would be very pleased to have ice time.”

26 respondents mentioned the desire for a new and/or expanded library.

“Let us build a new, state of the art library with more space for the up-and-coming generation of computer literate individuals. As it is, the current library does not have adequate parking space, and the addition of a second floor would only compound the problem.”

25 respondents mentioned a desire for a new and/or expanded museum – especially to preserve elements of the Town’s ship-building heritage. Interestingly, a small number of these respondents seemed unaware of the existing museum or its ship-building showcase. This suggests that in addition to looking at the expansion of existing attractions there may also be opportunities available to better market what the Town has already.

Vision 2020 believes that any decisions with respect to expansion of existing services should be based on, among other things, a review of existing user-numbers. Therefore,

▲ Only if user numbers warrant it, support plans for an expanded library, including an expanded book collection and electronic information-network. Support the renovation of the library only as need and numbers demonstrate.

▲ Support the need for a second-ice-surface and/or look at the cost of better upkeep for the already existent (outdoor) ice surfaces.

Downtown – First Street

First Street is, for many people, the first thing that they see of Collingwood. As a component of Highway 26 it acts as a key traffic corridor through Town. More than that, however, it is the site of a number of key shops and services. The Committee feels that earlier studies – such as the
1992 Parker Transportation Study and the more recent Stenton update were accurate in their assessment that the street needed revitalization. Because of the central role that this street plays in the Town, we feel it would be in the Town’s best interests to engage in a program of beautification and functional improvements to the design so that the street better reflects the overall vision of the Town. Among other things this would serve the dual purpose of providing the Town with a welcoming and inviting corridor (versus a throughway of fast-food stores and signs) and provide the opportunity to turn First Street into a viable tourist attraction in its own right – a “Grand Avenue” as the Parker Study called it.

Develop a plan to revitalize and beautify the First Street corridor and convert it to a “Grand Avenue.” Develop an integrated plan for the street that builds upon both its role as a commercial area/transport corridor as well as the first thing many people see of Collingwood.” Consider the following options:

- planting trees and gardens (perhaps in partnership with local businesses and community groups) on the side of the roads and, perhaps, in centerlane islands (in conjunction with traffic recommendations);
- enforce the policy with respect to signage (commercial and directional);
- review zoning to encourage a greater mix of retail/commercial options.
- obtain vacant retail lots (if any) for the purpose of providing green-space to the area;
- lobby businesses on First St. to improve the aesthetic quality of the street with regard to retail signage.
- develop pedestrian, bike-lane and trail (car-less) links between the Downtown core and the Western node.

Downtown – Hurontario, Heritage and More

▲ Recognize the demand for “heritage” values and associated aesthetic elements. Develop a plan of action for LACAC (heritage) designation including a strategy that encourages the restoration of heritage buildings while balancing the needs of business (retail/commercial sector) with the Town’s cultural history.

▲ Have the Town assume a leadership role in encouraging the improvement of Collingwood’s heritage element by (e.g.) (a) considering a restoration/revitalization fund; (b) offering restoration loans; (c) offsetting any increase in taxes that may result from architectural improvement (and other types of beautification).

▲ Conduct a study to identify the costs associated with heritage restoration, and define what “heritage restoration” might mean, in terms of different alternatives, costs, etc. Establish heritage priorities.
Enforce property standard by-laws and mandate improvements starting in the downtown core and major arteries.

Tourist Enhancement and Related Animation of Downtown

Animate the downtown! Encourage the development of a “downtown fun” plan which could include:

- busking and street musicians
- sidewalk and public art
- sculptures (but no Elvis statues please!)
- planned flowers
- creative use of colour

Promote “tourist” hours for Downtown retail outlets so that weeknight and weekend evenings can be viable shopping times. Encourage this especially during signature events such as the Elvis festival. Consider the marketing and staffing dimensions of this issue.

Downtown - Beautification

- Support a plan of action for the beautification of Hurontario Street and the Downtown as a whole. Increase the number of benches, bike locking posts and flower planters in Downtown.

- Consider the use of a new Cultural Centre as an “anchor” for the revitalized Downtown.

- Consider increasing the number of streetlights in key downtown areas. Utilize shorter (heritage-style) light poles to give them a more “human-scale.”

- Encourage the use of aimed lighting to highlight architectural features of heritage buildings (illumination and highlighting).

Retail Issues

There are a number of different issues that relate to matters of retail shopping in Collingwood. Again, these include:

- Perceived and real issues with retail mix, customer service and loss of retail dollars (leakage) to other shopping areas
- Perceived shortage of parking
- Shortage of retail / commercial space in the Downtown area

In terms of the Supreme Ruler survey, a number of respondents made mention of issues relating to shopping. A key theme of respondents was the need for more diversity, better service and improved convenience within the Collingwood retail sector.

A large number of respondents (302) made mention of shopping malls, with an overwhelming number of these respondents registering a desire to see either improvements made to the existing Blue Mountain Mall, or the construction of a new mall. It is interesting to note the age breakdown of these respondents:
Another key shopping related issue was a desire for “more stores,” “better stores,” and greater variety in shopping. These terms, like “mall” were skewed in favour of the under-18 demographic, though less so than in the above chart (by a ratio of about 2 to 1 between under-18’s and the remaining adult categories.

Vision 2020 interprets these shopping related comments (there were very few that spoke out against improved retail mix, etc.) as being indicative of a need to look closely at the handling of retail issues in this Town. Vision 2020 believes that Town has made a step in the right direction with their recent Retail Sector Survey conducted by Advisory Services. Currently we are awaiting the publication of the results of this survey and look forward to the insight it will provide. Based on our own knowledge of the retail situation in Collingwood we submit the following recommendations:

▲ Promote a better mix of retail outlets and encourage service outlets to relocate away from the mainfloor/storefront parts of Hurontario St.

▲ Work with Downtown Collingwood/BIA and Chamber of Commerce to develop voluntary standards for Customer Service. Focus on:
  • Establishing more consistent retail hours
  • Providing a program of incentives for improved customer service and customer service training
  • Establishing a mystery-shopper program to monitor customer service in retail outlets.

▲ Downtown shopping hours must be consistent in order to attract and maintain the area consumers. It is recommended that retail operators maintain minimum hours Monday to Saturday of 9:30am to 6:00pm. As a starting point it is further recommended that retail operators consider remaining open Friday evening until 9:00pm and Sunday from 12:00 to 4:00pm.

▲ Modify zoning so that service-outlets can operate on the 2nd floor of the aforementioned commercial sites so that a better retail mix can be had on the main floor areas. Establish/modify by-laws to stimulate an increase in the downtown retail mix.

▲ Consider establishing a fund for the revitalization of upper stories of downtown buildings for residential use, so as to build up the “people” component of the downtown.

▲ Investigate the possibility of utilizing alleyways behind Hurontario (Pine/Ste. Marie) for either additional retail space and/or additional housing possibilities. This endeavor can involve the following:
  • rehabilitation grants;
  • cleaning alleyways;
  • waiving development fees for downtown residential;
  • waiving current Official Plan requirements regarding the amount of parking space per/dwelling (in these areas).
Allow more outdoor cafe-style seating on the sidewalks. Encourage restaurants to offer outdoor service and create incentives/by-law amendments to allow for outdoor patios.

Encourage more commercial development on Pine Street and Ste. Marie.

Encourage and promote the expansion and/or development of coordinated shopping facilities/mall in the western node and continue to enforce and support OPA 37.

Downtown and Attractions-related Automotive Traffic Issues

In addition to considering the traffic related issues associated with First Street and Hurontario, it is also important to recognize previous transportation recommendations surrounding transit and parking as being part of the Downtown and Attraction Issues.

Ensure that public transportation is part of any and all planning for attractions-related matters.

Ensuring that a core-to-core (downtown-to-downtown) regional transportation initiative linking together key Georgian Triangle Towns (and the village at Blue Mountain) is an immediate priority.

Downtown – Pedestrian-Friendly

Intimately related to the issue of automotive traffic issues in the Downtown core is the need to consider the possibility of an automotive-free area in the Downtown – or, at the very least, the possibility of making the Downtown more pedestrian-friendly – encouraging alternative forms of transportation while simultaneously discouraging excessive automobile traffic amongst residents and tourists.

Vision 2020 believes that the Town should orient itself toward promoting alternatives to automotive traffic in both existing and future areas of development. In particular, the Committee has made the following recommendations:

Investigate the possibility of creating a pedestrianized zone in the Downtown and/or new Harbourlands developments. With this in mind:

- Study the means and alternatives available for making a "pedestrian-friendly" downtown.
- Promote pedestrian and bicycle traffic
- Promote pedestrian-oriented signs
- Consider alternatives to automotive traffic.

Ensure that strong pedestrian, trail and bike-lane corridors and connections are developed between the Downtown and the Western node.

Attractions – Environment/Green Spaces

See also, Chapter 5 – Our Environment

Continue to enhance the Town’s green-spaces, including parks – engage in a program of qualitative and quantitative improvement. Better promote better parks!

Consider the development of a Parks Master Plan that outlines a set of standards (construction, design, maintenance, etc) for
“what we want our parks to be.” Incorporate this into a Green Spaces Master Plan.

▲ Ensure that adequate waste AND recycling facilities are available during signature events.

▲ Increase the number of trees and shrubbery and green-space elements downtown. Integrate such a development with an overall urban forestry/green space project.

▲ Foster an alliance between the Town, the Chamber, Downtown Collingwood/BIA and the Horticultural Society to develop green-space “showcases” at key locations around Town, such as the Station.

▲ Encourage pilot projects featuring split-stream waste receptacles (garbage/recyclables).

Harbourlands

Although there was a separate question specifically relating to the Harbourlands area, survey respondents were vocal in including the waterfront as part of their discussion of the Collingwood Downtown and Attractions. Indeed a large number of responses included some discussion of the Harbourlands.

Principally, the Harbourlands were seen as the principal candidate site for revitalization. Were this undertaken, the Town’s waterfront could act as both an attraction in its own right and as a key venue for one or more other attractions. A well-developed green-space all along the waterfront was seen as an excellent draw for both tourists and residents, while the presence of some combination of cultural centre and/or retail development, was seen as a boon to the Harbourlands.

Based on the Attractions and Downtown related responses, Vision 2020 has proposed a number of recommendations. Please note, however, that the Harbourlands and recommendations surrounding it are dealt with in more detail in Chapter Four.

▲ Wherever possible, promote visual and physical access to the waterfront. Consider access issues as they relate to a potential pedestrianized area at the waterfront. Also consider the need to make the waterfront at least partly accessible for automotive and/or public transit traffic - e.g. by extending the “tree” streets north of First and having them terminate in Cul-de-sacs that could then link in with trails, boardwalk etc.

▲ Revise existing Waterfront Masterplan to include Vision 2020 recommendations.

▲ Promote existing and new waterfront development with better signage.

▲ Develop the waterfront with a comprehensive program for revitalizing key areas with trail, retail and cultural facilities... investigate rezoning areas that are not currently under the Town’s ownership to encourage the transfer of these areas to the Town. Revitalize the terminals and consider a shipbuilding heritage facility.

▲ Consider a commercial component in the Parks Master Plan so as to allow for waterfront restaurants.

▲ Support the development of cultural facilities (e.g. museums) so that they can better promote Collingwood’s water-related heritage to the citizens of the Town.
The Harbourlands featured prominently in people’s comments on a desired attraction for the Town. Though much of the issues associated with waterfront development are covered in a later chapter, we feel it important to reiterate two of the recommendations that emerged from our reading of Attractions-related responses. The reason for this is that the Harbourlands when revitalized, will represent a “draw” for residents and visitors to the community. It also represents a viable possibility as an extension of the Downtown.

▲ Establish a strategy to extend the “tree” streets north of Hurontario.

▲ Develop a program to extend the Downtown retail/commercial element to the waterfront.

Town Square

In older cities, particularly in Europe and Asia, the common meeting point is the Town Square. It is here that markets are held and performances staged, for squares are the point of convergence for roads and people, travelers and revelers alike. Modern towns and cities built without Town squares often seem to lose a key dimension of public space. 67 Respondents to the Attractions question expressed their desire for a Town Square. The Committee feels that a Town Square for Collingwood would go part of the way to satisfying the need for a pedestrian area in Collingwood. As well, a town square could be developed in such a way as to provide a centre-point or “anchor” for the Town and could provide a viable attraction for residents and visitors alike. Respondents seemed to focus on two key candidate sites – in front of Town Hall or at the foot of Hurontario as part of a revitalized Harbourlands development. Owing to the great number of responses that discussed the Harbourlands, the Committee feels that a square at First and Hurontario could function as a gateway to the new waterfront. We believe that this is a priority area for Council to explore.

▲ Investigate the issues surrounding the development of a Town Square at the top of Hurontario Street. Develop a plan of action to design, fund and implement such a Town Square. Develop this with consideration to the need for enhancement of the Harbourlands as a whole.

▲ Investigate purchasing plots of land along First Street for the purpose of developing access point(s) to the harbour.

Special Events / Signature Events

Special and Signature events are a central element in the Town’s tourist economy. The Committee believes that such events play a vital function in marketing the Town as well as in stimulating key sectors of the local economy. At the same time, we believe the events could be developed further so as to ensure that they involve different sectors of the Town’s populace. As well, we feel that to provide consistency in how these events are planned, funded and marketed there needs to be an protocol established that will ensure the long term viability of both existing successful events as well as newer events. To this end, we have made a number of recommendations:

▲ More signature events are a good thing! Develop signature events that are inclusive of all age groups. Draw tourists from different demographic communities and, thus, provide opportunities for Collingwood’s different demographic communities. Elvis festival, Electronic Music Festival, Busking Festival.

▲ Create benchmarks related to the growth and development of special events.
▲ Related to this: establish a funding benchmark for all new signature events that includes start-up dollars, promotion of fiscal self-sufficiency and recognition of the marketing opportunities that such events play. Make this funding strategy part of an overall policy for special events.

▲ Develop a regionally based tourist attraction for one week or more... perhaps a caravan-style program that links the communities of the Georgian Triangle – regional cooperation through a "fun" initiative.

Youth Issues

Vision 2020 was troubled to read a number of submissions from youth that echoed the following sentiments:

"The teens in this town need something to do, somewhere to go"

"We should have more attractions close to downtown so the kids had something to do"

There was also an extraordinarily large number of submissions from the under-18 category in which teens (172 out of 302) indicated that they wanted a mall. Given that malls fulfil a well-documented social function amongst certain segments of the youth population (in addition to their retail function), we feel this is further evidence of the need to attend to youth issues. The Committee feels strongly that the issue of youth and their needs should be investigated fully and an appropriate and inclusive strategy be developed to include the concerns of young people. Vision 2020 supports the work of the Youth Committee in this respect and encourages Council to support them in their endeavors where possible.

▲ Investigate youth recreation issues – involve the Youth Committee as well as a broad range of youth from different backgrounds in the process. Consider hiring a youth coordinator and setting up a "youth fund" to create attractions / amenities for youth.

Downtown – Signage

Current signage by-law work is a step in the right direction, though there have been concerns expressed that indicate a perception that there are opportunities to improve the system. For example, there are a number of possible areas to strengthen the Town’s signage – such as in better promoting parking, pedestrian trails and bike-lanes, of highlighting the various areas or districts of Collingwood and so on. Signage design issues are well attended to, but matters of functionality can, in some cases, be improved – particularly with existing signage intended for automobile traffic.

▲ Invest in heritage-style street signs for the Downtown streets and possibly for other designated areas.

▲ Work with Downtown Collingwood/BIA on a system of pedestrian-oriented signs that can offer direction to sites, parks, and trails. Consider using these signs to promote things like a "heritage walking tour" of the Downtown area and its border areas.

▲ Ensure that there is sufficient signage to direct people to the municipal parking lots.

▲ Ensure that the signage directed at automobile traffic is clearly visible (readable) to drivers.
and passengers. Ensure that existing and future signs are not “crowded” in this respect.

▲ Continue to support the principals of the commercial signage by-law and encourage its strict enforcement.

I kneel here, my breath coming in short gasps. I feel euphoric, having climbed solo to the top of the steepest rockface in Collingwood. I have reached the plateau of Terminal Mountain, but the surface beneath my knees is steady and safe. It is, in fact, carpeted, and there are other people here, not in climbing gear as I am, but in casual attire, dining on champagne and Eggs Benedict and enjoying the magnificent early morning vista from the Terminal View Café. They have taken the glass elevator that runs up the south face of what was once - was it that long ago? - the abandoned Collingwood Terminal Building, the last remnant of Collingwood's once proud shipping heritage. The north face has no elevator. It has been turned into a rock-climbing wall and even experienced climbers find it arduous. It is the first time that I have completed the ascent alone, and it has taken me ninety minutes.

The tourists simply marvel at the view. Today the chameleon-like waters of Georgian Bay are as turquoise and calm as a Caribbean getaway, and if you were a visitor you would think, gazing across the sleeping sailboat masts in the newly named Gateway Harbour, along the two and a half kilometres of parkland that is now known to one and all as The Gateway (to Georgian Bay), that Collingwood had always been like this.

But I know differently. I was here twenty years ago. And I remember.

In late summer of the year 2009, Maclean's Magazine called it "the most impressive combination of community and government momentum in Ontario's history, a marvel of collective determination...a testament to the power of coordinated effort, a metamorphosis of planning." A photograph, taken from the top of Terminal Mountain, provided Maclean's with the cover for its August issue.

The work actually started in the spring of 2001 when a number of determined Collingwood Citizens groups, agreeing that nothing would get done unless someone actually did something, picked up the gauntlet thrown down by a think-tank known as the Collingwood Vision 2020 Committee, which advocated responsible urban planning as the key to Collingwood's future. Then the Town itself started to organize fundraising programs and strategic partnerships. The Terminal Building was an early project. The old grain elevator had been cited as a potential site for a theatre or concert hall. A few people were disappointed when that didn't happen, but the rock-climbing walls became a wonderful daily draw, as people gathered to watch local and world-renowned climbers take up the challenge of what became known as Terminal Mountain. The restaurant at the top was more evolution than planning. It started with a welcoming committee that, on cold days, greeted climbers with hot coffee when they reached the building's summit. Then a night club, Terminal Sound, opened in the base of the building (the acoustics were incredible) beside the new sailing shop. Inevitably, as word of 'the view,' got around, people demanded an easier route to the top than the one the climbers took.

At approximately the same time, the Cultural Centre was started. In paving the way for the Centre, the Mayor and Council of the day achieved what many had thought impossible - they managed to re-engage the approval given to a waterfront project by an earlier council. Through strategic but forceful negotiating Collingwood was soon in possession of the entire stretch of waterfront from Sunset Point to Harbourview Park and beyond, an uninterrupted shoreline of almost three kilometers.

By the time construction on the Collingwood Cultural Centre wrapped up, other developments had also been completed. Three of the so-called tree streets - Pine, Oak and Maple were extended north of First Street, terminating in a parking cul-de-sac. Spectacular landscape design effectively hid the presence of the parked cars from Gateway Park, Collingwood's award-winning blend of land, water and enterprise. The boardwalks and bike paths reverberated with the magical, musical energy of buskers and boutiques and outdoor cafes, of beaches and sailboats, of playground laughter and the whirlwind thoughts of speed-chess players. This really was the gateway to Georgian Bay. Collingwood, through its own grit and determination, had welcomed the Bay back into its collective life.

In truth, the Bay had welcomed Collingwood back into hers, had embraced us, forgiven us. For, in the Harbourlands, lays the soul of our community.
**Blueprint:** Key Principles for the Harbourlands

**Goals / Guiding Principles**

In keeping with the great waterfront developments in other communities around the world, Collingwood must establish a set of guiding principles for ALL of its Harbourlands, so as to ensure that the waterfront is

- clean
- green
- useable
- diverse
- open
- accessible
- connected
- affordable
- attractive
Blueprint: Harbourlands – Issues, Perceptions and Recommendations

**Issues**

- The Harbourlands needs to be more broadly recognized as our best asset and biggest opportunity.
- There is a need to revitalize portions of the harbourlands… some areas of the waterfront are in desperate need of beautification
- Need to highlight the environmental significance of the area
- Need to consider a revitalized waterfront as a key tourist attraction
- Need to ensure culture and recreation are part of continued revitalization efforts
- Currently, a large portion of the area that people would like to see revitalized is privately owned
- There is no longer broad community support for the proposed style of development contained in OPA 33.
- Need to ensure access to the area
- The areas of the Harbourlands that have already been upgraded could be better marketed.
- The cost associated with particular projects -- e.g., painting the Terminals -- is quite substantial

**The Harbourlands: A Work in Progress**

More than anything, the Town needs to look at the Harbourlands area as a project in need of completion. There have been some tremendous initiatives undertaken in the waterfront area – the Arboretum, Sunset Point, and the new Harbourlands Park are amongst the highlights. But there is more to be done. Visible remains of the shipbuilding industry continue to mar a key traffic corridor. The majestic and unused Terminals look tired and, at the very least, in need of paint.

Collingwood, as one survey respondent said, needs to consider the waterfront/Harbourlands area as the Town’s “ace in the hole.” Vision 2020 agrees with this sentiment, and this means ensuring that its revitalization and improvement should be a priority item for the Town. As another respondent advised: “think big, and think long term.”

There are a number of key areas that need to be attended to before anything else: Articulating values, changing key policy, planning appropriately, and planning big.

The values expressed on the previous page are ones that Vision 2020 feels are key to any and all waterfront development.

However, these values, and the comments that survey respondents made, suggest that there are major flaws with the Town’s current position on the Harbourlands, as exemplified by OPA 33. This Official Plan Amendment called for, among other things, 8-9 stories residential towers that would effectively “block-off” much of the waterfront area occupied by the CSL lands.

Based on responses from survey respondents and workshop attendees, we believe that the time has come to proactively tackle OPA 33, and replace it with the type of waterfront development that the Community wants and needs. Not only has OPA 33 not been acted upon by CSL, but the plans they proposed are not in keeping with what the community wants for its waterfront. It is time for a public re-examination and discussion of the best land-uses for the CSL property. In short, the Town needs to plan the Harbourlands with the whole Town in mind – renewing the harbourfront means, in essence, renewing Collingwood.
▲ Ensure that any and all activities and initiatives taken with respect to the Harbourlands area follow an established set of guiding principles for waterfront development, such that the waterfront should be:

- clean
- diverse
- connected
- green
- open
- affordable
- useable
- accessible
- attractive

▲ Reconsider and revisit OPA 33. The citizens of Collingwood do not support the type of initiatives that it contains.

▲ Seek development proposals that are in-keeping with the Harbourlands as a multi-use area, with an emphasis on green-space, with commercial ventures allowed (limited in size and scope).

▲ Establish a mandate where the Town should do its best to acquire privately owned portions of the Harbourlands as well as key visual/physical access points to the Harbourlands along First Street. The Town should then solicit development proposals that are in keeping with the values contained within these recommendations.

It should be noted that the majority of Supreme Ruler respondents who commented on the issue were opposed to residential development on the waterfront. Vision 2020 feels that a review is more appropriate, with a view to the possibility of allowing 2-3 storey commercial/residential buildings (c.f. OPA 11). We do, however, feel that it is important to make the following recommendation:

▲ Disallow high-rise (above 3 stories) building in all Harbourlands development projects.

Access and Transportation

In order for the Harbourlands to function as a destination area, it has to be developed in such a way that it is easy to get to, and easy to move through. Ensuring that the Harbourlands is accessible and available to all, means that the needs of different types of visitors have to be anticipated. Not only does the Harbourlands area itself have to be well-connected with trails and bike-lanes, but to function well it also has to have multiple entry and exit points. Moreover, these entry and exit points will have to be integrated by making some form of public transit stop(s) available, as well as a certain amount of automotive parking – for tourists and residents. For these reasons, Vision 2020 makes the following recommendations:

▲ Extend the "tree" streets north of First Street and have these function as multiple entry-points to a revitalized waterfront. Utilize cul-de-sacs and landscaping to minimize automotive aesthetic impacts.

▲ Establish an enhanced network of paved trails and bike paths along the waterfront. Ensure that there are multiple entry and exit points for these paths.

▲ Ensure that public and tourist transportation initiatives be extended to the new harbourlands developments.
The Terminals

The Terminals, or Grain Elevators represent perhaps the most readily identifiable aspect of the Town. It’s true that they don’t please everybody. Indeed, some of the Supreme Ruler responses contained directions such as “blow up the terminals.” Still, having said this, a full 75% of responses that included the Terminals did so by mentioning them in a favourable light. As one astute student remarked:

“I think the Collingwood Terminals should stay. It is a part of our history. Everybody in Collingwood has a story about the terminals.”

Regardless of whether people saw the Terminals as a potential look-out site, theatre, restaurant or rock-climbing facility, they are in need of a number of things. Currently, their functionality is mostly symbolic: they are a landmark, a reminder of another time. Having said that, their status as a “marker” for Collingwood is being sullied through neglect. The paint has faded on the outer walls, and there are thousands of square feet of space inside that are not being used. The people of Collingwood are keen to see something done with the Terminals and soon!

With this in mind, Vision 2020 proposes the following recommendations:

- Support all protective measures for the Collingwood Terminals, and if possible seek heritage designation for the Elevator-structure.
- Engage in a program of enhancement for the facade of the Terminals, either by painting it, or using it as a medium for murals, or by incorporating an improved facade into other design-related improvements for the structure.
- Ensure that making a decision about the future function of the Terminals is a priority.
- Pursue the possibility of creating a multi-use facility at the Terminals.
- Explore the costs and issues associated with a viewing area on top of the Terminals.

Culture and Recreation

Amongst the multi-use requirements of the Harbourlands, the Town needs to ensure that culture and recreation continue to be primary goals for the Harbourlands. It is essential that the area be “opened up” and made more accessible both visually and physically. At the same time, the natural heritage present along the waterfront – heritage that includes sensitive wetlands and other environmentally significant terrain, needs to be incorporated into any planning for the area. Even so, an efficient blend of culture and nature still allows for a wide range of interests that can potentially be accommodated.

Respondents felt that the Harbourlands area (either without or including the Terminals) would be an ideal location for a theatre, concert facility, bandshell, art gallery and amusement park, amongst other things. Vision 2020 believes that extra caution when developing the Harbourlands is of the utmost importance. At the same time, the Committee feels that a vision such as is contained in the following quote can be done tastefully, and in a culturally and environmentally sensitive manner:

“The harbour lands should be developed as mostly parkland with a theatre by the water as its focal point. A good waterfront restaurant would enhance this area, as well as some retail. The theatre complex should incorporate an art gallery, boardwalk, marina and low density recreational could be accommodated.”

Vision 2020 has developed a number of proposals:
Consider the feasibility of various harbourlands locations for a variety of Town Cultural facilities. Considerable support exists for a waterfront theatre/art gallery/cultural centre. Other possibilities include a "boat" facility to complement the ship-building heritage promoted by the museum.

Reserve land for an outdoor bandshell. As with the previous recommendations, establish strategic partnerships so that this facility gets built.

Develop a program of waterfront "events" to better promote this area.

Support the existing master-plan for a public marina with public boating access including amenities for gas, pumping facilities, etc.)

There is significant public sentiment regarding the issue of the fencing surrounding the existing Yacht Club. This issue should be revisited by Council and the Yacht Club so as to explore alternative options.

Explore the possibility of developing Piers and similar walkways in the waterfront area.

Beautification / Green Space

A key element in the Harbourlands development involves highlighting the environmental significance of the area. This can be accomplished through designating new development as green-space. There are other environmental initiatives that need to be considered as well.

A random keyword search of survey responses for the terms “green”, “environment” and “nature” yielded 32 responses.

A similar search on the term “park” yielded 145 separate responses. Interestingly, two different (and some might argue opposing) interpretations of the term emerged. The first meaning, used by 74% of respondents was “green space” or some variant thereof. The second, “a theme park” (an amusement park, skate park, water park, etc). While the majority of theme park advocates were either under 18 (56%) or minus an age listing (43%), the respondents calling for green parks were more evenly dispersed, as evidenced by the following chart:

Vision 2020 feels that, properly developed, the Collingwood Harbourlands will be able to appeal to all ages. In and of itself though, the Committee feels that the Harbourlands should have a timeless, natural quality, best exemplified by sufficient amounts of nature and culture. The following survey comment captures this sentiment:

"Traditionally, the town’s relationship to Georgian Bay was dictated by its major industry, the Shipyards. The removal of this barrier, allows for a complete re-imagining of our position on the
Bay, ... I see a continuous network of walkways, parkland, marinas, gardens and playgrounds.”

Vision 2020 believes a sound greenspace initiative for the Harbourlands can be achieved in part with the following recommendations:

- Support existing Harbourlands green-space and beautification initiatives.
- Establish an overall plan for waterfront greenspace as part of a Green Spaces Masterplan. Direct attention to the development of an ambitious Harbourview to Sunset Point Park.
- Ensure that urban forestry and horticultural elements are integrated into the Harbourlands park.
- Develop a section of the revitalized Harbourlands into an area with improved swimming. If possible, create a “sandy” beach with other “beach” amenities.
- Create partnerships to study, clean up, and regenerate contaminated areas.
- Ensure that a portion of the waterfront area is allowed to regenerate to a natural state, and that it remain off-limits to all but the most sensitive form of human encroachment.
- Ensure that the wetlands remain protected and support all measures for their enhanced protection. Ensure that guiding principles enshrine the high value of all aquatic habitats and ecosystems, including shoreline areas, beaches, wetlands, fish breeding grounds and so on, and establish that wherever possible measures are taken to regenerate and improve degraded areas.

Sewage Treatment Plant

A vocal element in Harbourlands responses made comments concerning the Sewage Treatment Plant. Principally, the concern in these responses concerned the odour emanating from the Plant – especially in summer time. Almost half of the 35 respondents were under 18 – perhaps due to the fact that as students on summer holiday, the under-18 demographic may have more first-hand experience with the effects of the sewage treatment plant than other age groups. The following comment provides a good example of the sentiments expressed in this respect:

“[A] major problem is the sewage treatment plant right downtown Collingwood. It needs to relocate and needs to be away from downtown.”

Vision 2020 agrees with this latter sentiment and feels that this issue will need to be looked at closely.

- Plan for the eventual removal of the Sewage Treatment Plant from the waterfront area.
- Support measures to improve the Sewage Treatment plant facilities to reduce odour.

Commercial

The Harbourlands provides the possibility for a wide range of undertakings. As was discussed earlier, Vision 2020 supports a well-planned blend of culture and nature. With the culture element, we feel that in addition to structures like a theatre or bandshell, there is also the opportunity to explore undertakings that are of a more retail-oriented nature. Consider the following survey submissions in this respect:

“I would like to develop the waterfront, by building open or old style buildings to compliment our harbor at the end of the main street. Small shops, cafes, small outdoor restaurants looking over the water.”
“With the two beautiful parks on either side of the CSL lands (Sunset point and Harbor View) I think we can afford some commercial development in the area to tie with the downtown core - however it must have and keep a connection to the said parks on either side.”

Vision 2020 believes that the waterfront, in combination with central access points from First Street and Hurontario, may well provide an exceptional opportunity for a pedestrian-oriented extension of the Downtown. The scale of this extension would have to be respectful of (and blended to match) environmental aspects, but could conceivably include boutiques, a restaurant or cafe and other small-scale commercial ventures. We have attempted to capture this with the following recommendations:

▲ Encourage, through appropriate zoning and other incentives, the development of a small-scale commercial sector on the waterfront, that includes boutiques, restaurants and other shops.

▲ Ensure that any commercial element in the Harbourlands area ties in strongly with the existing Downtown.

▲ Encourage commercial ventures, where feasible, at the Terminals.

▲ Ensure that sufficient standards are in place so that waterfront commercial ventures are tasteful and in keeping with citizens’ desire for the “small-town” feel.

▲ Foster links with towns in the Georgian Triangle. Create incentives for a regional boat tour that takes tourists to the waterfront towns in the region.

Marketing

Hand in hand with improving the look of the Harbourlands is the idea of making sure that people know it exists. There is no reason why Collingwood couldn’t be known as the waterfront to come to... but this requires marketing – both of the media type, and other means. This is in-line with the Committee’s feeling that the Town invest time and effort (as well as capital) to market itself in an optimal manner. To this end, we recommend:

▲ Better market and promote the existing and proposed Harbourlands development -- increase its presence as a culture and recreation destination via better signage, web-space, advertising and other means.

▲ Study other waterfront developments to search for additional ways to improve Collingwood’s Harbourlands.

Other Recommendations

The following recommendations dealing with Harbourlands are cross-referenced from other sections of the report.

▲ Where possible, promote visual and physical access to the waterfront. Consider access issues as they relate to a potential pedestrianized area at the waterfront. Also consider the need to make the waterfront at least partly accessible for automotive and/or public transit traffic – e.g. by extending the “tree” streets north of First and having them terminate in cul-de-sac’s that could then link in with trails, boardwalk etc.

▲ Promote existing and new waterfront development with better signage. Integrate these with an overall Waterfront Masterplan
(revised existing plans to include Vision 2020 recommendations.)

▲ Develop the waterfront with a comprehensive program for revitalizing key areas with trail, retail and cultural facilities... investigate rezoning areas that are not currently under the Town's ownership to encourage the transfer of these areas to the Town. Revitalize the terminals and consider a ship-building heritage facility.

▲ Consider a commercial component in the Parks Master Plan so as to allow for waterfront restaurants and shops.

▲ Support the development of cultural facilities (e.g. museums) so that they can better promote Collingwood's heritage to the citizens of the Town.

_Downtown – Harbourlands Development_

▲ Investigate purchasing plots of land along First Street for the purpose of developing access point(s) to the harbour and/or a future Town Square.
Chapter 5: Our Environment

December 12, 2020.

What's green and blue and white all over? Collingwood in winter. You don't get it, do you? That's because you're not from here. You see, Collingwood is a 'green' town...it's actually famous for its commitment to the environment. And it butts up against the clean blue waters of Georgian Bay. And, well, winter is white. Do you get it now?

If it wasn't for Georgian Bay being blue, someone once said, Collingwood would be totally green. At the end of the last century, Collingwood made headlines by being the first town on the Great Lakes to be delisted by the IJC. And it has maintained its excellent reputation as an environmental leader ever since. This year it hosted its seventh annual International Symposium for Environmental Communities.

Collingwood's citizens have always been proud of their environment, and the Town and its citizens have collectively taken an active stand as stewards of the land. Over the years the Town, working together with a network of local environmental groups, has taken the lead in a number of key areas. First came the Environmental Review program, which ensures that a broad range of environmental values are always at the heart of any and all new developments. This template was tried and tested with the revitalization of the waterfront, and quickly spread to include all new construction. That in itself constituted enormous change.

Suddenly, green-spaces and trails and bike-lanes were non-negotiable aspects of all new residential, commercial and industrial development.

The 'Waste Not' Reduction Campaign was another early success. After Toronto was forced to ship its garbage to Montreal in 2004, Collingwood hung its collective head in neighbourly shame before rallying to try to set a Guinness World Record as the town to dispose of the least garbage, per weight/per household/per week in a single year. Guinness declined, having no way of tabulating the data, so Collingwood issued a challenge to nine other similarly-sized towns in Canada and the United States to compete. Based on trust, all household garbage was weighed before disposal, and the results tabulated daily for a year. Our town came in second, beaten only by Ruphus, New Hampshire, which now bills itself as the cleanest little town in the world by a damsite. (There's a dam in their town, on the Ruphus River.) But Collingwood had once again issued a challenge and had led by example, and recycling and composting received a tremendous boost here.

Things have gotten to the point that families disposing of a single full bag of garbage per week get looks of disapproval from their neighbours.

Next came the Green Traffic Campaign, a week long contest in which adults went door to door collecting pledges from neighbours if they managed not to drive their motor vehicles for an entire week. Honestly, you'd swear you were in Amsterdam for all the bikes that filled the streets that week. The pledge revenues went towards the purchase of additional public charging centres for people who drove electric cars, and the Collingwood bicycle craze caught on forever.

Then the Town partnered with Downtown Collingwood/BIA to introduce a Yellow Bike Program, primarily for visitors, who can now go to a community bicycle rack, swipe a bike card and get a free two-wheeler to ride for the day. Their deposits are returned to them when the bike is returned and secured in its rack. Novel ideas like this have now become common place in the community of Collingwood.
**Goals / Key Principles**

Vision 2020 believes that a set of guiding principles or goals should be established to acknowledge the important role that the environment, local and otherwise, plays in the health and well-being of the Town. These goals state that the Town should:

- Have significant amounts of green and open spaces.
- Preserve representative portions of the Town’s various ecosystems.
- Improve waste reduction.
- Make efficient use of resources.
- Promote links between economy and ecology.
- Incorporate a broad range of environmental considerations when undertaking all future planning.
- Base it’s decisions on Good Science.
- Be respectful and cautious when undertaking activities that will affect the environment.
- Promote the environment throughout Collingwood.
**Blueprint: Our Environment – Issues, Perceptions and Recommendations**

**Issues**

- There is a need to expand waste reduction initiatives
- There is a need to improve matters relating to energy efficiency in the coming years
- The community needs to continue tackling pollution-related issues – at the individual level and on a sector-by-sector basis
- The local environment is affected by any and all development in the area (not only within our municipal boundaries, but outside of them, as well)
- Environmental issues permeate all facets of life in Collingwood, yet their role in the “big picture” is not fully understood
- There is a need to better promote the importance of environmental issues
- The role and importance of the environment has not been fully integrated, nor systematically applied as part of the Town's planning process
- The Town lacks a green spaces master plan
- The significant role of the environment in the local tourist economy has not been systematically explored
- A representative portion of the Town’s various ecosystems has not yet been preserved
- There is a need to further explore ways to “green” traffic – by encouraging a move to car-less and/or environmentally-friendly forms of transportation and behaviour
- Environmentally-related by-laws lack sufficient enforcement due to a shortage of Town staff

**Note**

This is an abbreviated analysis of Collingwood’s environmental issues, and is limited principally to a consideration of the recommendations put forth by the Committee on these issues. Currently, the materials contained in this section are being developed into a more comprehensive report which will attempt to cover a range of issues affecting the Town and its relationship with the natural environment.

**Community Visioning Workshop**

**Drawing exercise:**

Participants were asked to draw pictures of what they considered was important about the area. An overwhelming number of respondents made some form of reference to the environment.

On a more symbolic note, it is interesting to note that the two most common colours that participants used in their drawings of the Town were blue and green – could this be a testament to how much the citizens are conscious of Georgian Bay and the many and beautiful and natural features of the region?

**Waste Reduction Initiatives**

Sadly, Canada produces more solid waste per capita than any other nation in the world. To ensure that Collingwood does its part to reduce waste the Town should be looking at ways to increase the amount of material that is diverted from the landfill site.

- Ensure the enforcement of the current user-pay system for garbage removal. Consider making this user-pay system more stringent (by decreasing the number of allowable bags from 3 to 2, before stickers apply), with a view to
ultimately establishing a “pay for what you put out” system, such as those that have been successfully implemented in Meaford, Peel-Region and Penetanguishine.

▲ Establish a strictly enforced by-law for commercial garbage containers to ensure that such containers are kept closed and locked or in a walled area.

▲ Support continued municipal composting projects and subsidized “home-composting” initiatives. Extend this program to offer better composting options to apartment and condominium dwellers. Research more advanced technology re: in-vessel composting systems (and other types of composting systems), and consider these for municipal pilot projects -- along with other potential pilot projects such as incineration and wet/dry garbage separation.

▲ Utilize compost for parks and public green space.

▲ Support increased public education on composting and other waste-reduction initiatives.

▲ Develop a program to increase the number of materials that can be recycled (e.g. Plastic - 3,4,5’s, styrofoam and building materials). Investigate the cost and environmental efficiency of doing so. Establish the pick-up of fine paper as part of the municipal recycling program. Establish a “once-a-month” or bi-monthly drop-off day for all types of plastic and other recyclables in one of the bays at the Municipal Works Department.

▲ Explore the “pick-up” of used tires to use as part of a municipal tires-to-asphalt program.

▲ Encourage local businesses to reduce packaging and excessive waste product. Work with the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Collingwood/BIA on a product stewardship initiative?

▲ Within municipal offices, encourage a policy that promotes the use of “environmentally-friendly” products (recycled or tree-free paper, energy-efficient technology) and behaviour.

▲ Provide more waste-containers in public areas and on trails, etc. Ensure that these receptacles remain in place (and are serviced) year-round. Add animal waste containers.

▲ Encourage a more-frequent emptying of public-waste and recycling receptacles.

▲ Establish (or strengthen) and enforce a graded litter by-law with different fines for individual, commercial litter.

▲ Look into the possibility of a commercial facility to convert sludge to fertilizer.

▲ Ensure that builders are required to present (as part of development plans) a sufficient waste/recycling plan for building materials.
Energy Initiatives

▲ Support the retrofitting of municipal offices for energy efficiency. Support development of initiatives related to CO₂ reduction (e.g. 20% Club). Expand these initiatives to other Greenhouse gas emissions.

▲ Investigate the conversion of municipal offices to alternative-energy sources -- either wholly or in combination with existing energy sources. Direct Collus to offer consumers the possibility of energy from “green” providers. For example, wind power.

▲ Establish solar power and other alternative energy pilot projects. Investigate the various options for different projects. Consider a wind-mill generator in some location as part of a pilot project.

▲ Actively promote cost-savings associated with energy efficiency and retrofitting.

Pollution Initiatives

▲ Support a program to encourage the phase out of residential pesticide usage. If necessary, offer grants to local environmental organization to encourage and facilitate this. Develop an integrated pest management policy for the municipality and encourage the extension of this plan to the community as a whole.

▲ Investigate the major sources of pollution in Collingwood. Establish a set of guiding principles around the reduction of local air, water, soil, noise and visual pollution.

▲ Support an anti-idling policy and promote this policy along-side improved public education on the effects of automotive emissions.

▲ Consider the installation of roundabouts/traffic circles in existing and new “intersection points” -- so as to improve efficiency and reduce energy consumption and air pollution.

Industry/Business Initiatives

▲ Investigate the establishment of a fund to offer grants and loans to local businesses so that they can retrofit themselves for environmental efficiency. Partner with the Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Collingwood/BIA for this.

▲ Establish a stated policy on promoting clean-industry, and discouraging industry that is not clean. Direct the Town’s Economic Development department to solicit environmentally-friendly industry to Collingwood.

▲ Actively enforce federal/provincial rules regarding emissions of all types.

Green-Space Initiatives

▲ Encourage a policy for urban forestry that establishes a protocol for tree-planting and maintenance of trees on municipal property. Enshrine the importance of trees (for air quality, visual enhancement, etc.) as a guiding principle. Where urban forestry initiatives are
done in collaboration with Downtown Collingwood/BIA or other parties (i.e. in the Downtown) ensure that each party's roles and expectations are clearly articulated.

▲ Ensure that all new developments have a green-space plan that includes an audit of existing and planned trees, and establishes rules around the protection of these trees. Consider using the City of Kitchener's Tree Plan as a model for this recommendation.

▲ Continue to vigorously support enhanced protection for streams, waterways. Support the proposed channelization of Black Ash Creek as well as the enhanced protection of Silver Creek wetlands.

▲ Ensure that a representative portion of Collingwood's land-base (forest, wetlands, beach area, etc.) is preserved and maintained free from development and allowed to exist free from all but the most sensitive forms of human encroachment.

▲ Expand the current number of parks. Develop a "Parks Master Plan" as part of a Green Spaces Master Plan that establishes the protocol for park maintenance and the quantitative and qualitative improvement of parks.

▲ Establish a Green Spaces Master Plan. Establish standards for Green Spaces similar to those contained in OPA 37 throughout Town including specific standards for:
  - traffic corridors
  - gateways
  - parks
  - downtown

▲ Ensure that green-space, wildlife corridors and linkages to existing and future trails and pathways are requirements of all new housing developments. Do not allow these requirements to be "traded" for other concessions. Ensure that they remain non-negotiable.

▲ Encourage the beautification of the Town through a variety of means. Solicit a report on possible beautification projects, alternatives and costs. Work with environmental groups, the horticultural society, local schools and community groups etc. to implement these projects.

▲ Support plans for the beautification of First Street. (c.f. Downtown and Transportation Recommendations).

▲ Make First Street, the Harbourlands, and the Town as a whole, people-friendly in greenery, scale, development and attitude.

▲ Develop a marked system of trails and bike baths that link the different parks, schools, residential and commercial areas together.

▲ Encourage the development and maintenance of community gardens.

▲ Establish a program of Green Space "credits" for business and industry only -- and only where there are existing property constraints -- allow industry to trade green space provisions on their property for cash-in-lieu that could be put into a green-space fund.

▲ Developers could contribute in-kind via lot levies and land designations (as a means to enhance green-space, etc.)

▲ Strive to become a "Communities in Bloom" recognized community.
Transportation Initiatives
(repeated from transportation section)
▲ Encourage a move to car-less forms of transportation for local transportation needs.

▲ Investigate the improvement of public transit (e.g. via subsidization, marketing, etc.) and consider the possibility of a "tourist" transit system. Ensure that such a system is resident/youth friendly.

▲ Create a regional transportation initiative (e.g. a bus) that links Collingwood with key Georgian Triangle towns on a frequent and consistent basis.

▲ Encourage the development of bike lanes and trails. Establish a protocol for the quantitative and qualitative improvement of bike lanes and trails in Collingwood with links to the region. (e.g. more lanes, paved trails, trails plowed in winter, etc.).

▲ Investigate the establishment of a “yellow-bike” project.

▲ Ensure that trails are kept clean. Provide sufficient receptacles for garbage, recyclables, etc. Establish a regular clean-up schedule.

Policy Initiatives
▲ Investigate the possibility of offering grants to encourage environmentally-related pilot projects within the community.

▲ Establish an event that is related to the celebration and appreciation of the local environment. This should be over and above “Earth Day”.

▲ Consider the development of an environmental “attraction” -- an ecology centre or other similar venture. Develop plans to market the whole Town as a “green town” when a sufficient number of these recommendations have been implemented.

▲ Ensure that ecologically friendly rural values are also preserved as part of the Town's overall "vision" for the future. Investigate the various ways to accomplish this, such as the purchase of development rights for rural spaces around Town.

▲ Ensure that Collingwood’s rural-economy continues to be encouraged alongside other forms of industry and commerce.

▲ Establish a template or policy for municipal planning so that it always contains a consideration of long and short-term environmental costs/benefits associated with a given project. Ensure that part (but not all) of the onus for producing such consideration lies with developers, etc. Wherever possible, ensure that the work of the municipal government is done with a view to how various projects affect the environment. Enhance working relationships and partnerships with a variety of local environmental groups to facilitate this.

▲ Commission an annual “State of Collingwood's Environment” report to better outline the status of the municipality’s natural environment and resources.
▲ Strictly enforce all environmentally-related by-laws. Budget for more Full Time or Part Time staff where needed.

▲ Publicize those individuals/departments that will be responsible for implementing these projects and enhance the opportunities for public involvement with the process. Ensure that a program of "sustainable development" is promoted for the Town such that it balances economy with environment, nature with culture and the needs of the present with the needs of future generations.

**Other Recommendations**

In addition to the recommendations contained in this section, a number of other environmentally related recommendations have been developed throughout this report. These recommendations are cross-listed here and include the following:

**Region - Environment**

▲ Encourage municipal departments and local organizations to collaborate with other municipalities on trans-boundary environmental issues. Support and enhance existing regional efforts on environmental issues.

▲ Use the precautionary principle when negotiating environmentally-sensitive issues with regional partners.

▲ Support the establishment of a regional sorting centre for recyclables (so as to increase the number of materials that can be recycled).

▲ Ensure that the values expressed elsewhere in this report in support of the environment apply to any and all initiatives involving other municipalities. Ensure that these values are incorporated into a regional planning model.

▲ Continue to work to enhance and market regional trail and bike-lane initiatives and use these as a model of regional cooperation.

▲ Direct Collus to offer green-sourced energy to its regional consumers.
Chapter 6: Housing

June 12, 2020.

With a population approaching 35,000, Collingwood is thriving at a level of diversity we are unfamiliar with. And, sure, we’ve got growing pains. All successful communities do. But we’re in better shape than most. Because we saw the boom coming twenty years ago. So we planned.

With an expanded work force, a larger base of retirees and expatriates from the what is now North America’s second largest population belt, a solid middle-class citizenry and a community rich and diverse, Collingwood is home to a vast range of different age groups and income levels. But, through planning, the Town’s housing needs have been accommodated.

Our housing mandate back then was to reflect the core values that people have come to associate with Collingwood. We have maintained our small town feel, but (as always) with one foot in the past and the other stepping boldly into the future. We have ensured that all new homes and rental accommodations are well-built, environmentally friendly and wired for the information economy.

Downtown has become home to a vibrant new type of rental apartment. Refurbished store-top flats and lofts have provided leading-edge, affordable residential housing. Our Communities in Bloom judges have visited a number of roof-top garden projects in recent years, and have publicly honoured the winners – everyone loves a contest. Downtown nightlife has thrived with the addition of these centrally located living quarters. Adhering to the wishes of Collingwood’s citizenry, the town has ensured that all new apartments meet height restrictions, and an emphasis has been placed on buildings that have a "human-scale" attached to them.

The new subdivisions that have sprung up in the Western node and elsewhere employ radical concepts in design. One award-winning local builder, who saw the future and responded to it, has created a number of blended housing communities, incorporating a mix of dwelling styles to allow people from a range of economic backgrounds to live together and to enjoy an inclusive and shared sense of community. At first, most developers balked at the idea, insisting that the high-end purchasers would never buy into the concept. And they were right. The older ones didn’t. But the affluent 40 year-olds did. As one purchaser put it: You don’t stop boogying just because you’ve made some money. We’re wealthy. We’re not retired.

With prudent and holistic planning, the Town has fostered the creation of a number of smaller, interconnected local communities linked together under the larger umbrella of the Town. Corner stores and neighborhood cafes have sprung up again, allowing for pedestrian convenience and comfortably close places to meet friends and neighbors for cups of cappuccino or glasses of wine. At least two of the new developments have followed the Town's lead and incorporated central squares and public spaces into their design plans.

It sure is nice to call Collingwood my home.
Blueprint: Housing – Key Principles

Goals / Key Principles

In the future the Town of Collingwood will have to play a greater role with respect to a number of housing issues. Vision 2020 believes that Council’s attention should be directed towards ensuring that, in future, the following goals will be incorporated into all housing planning:

- An adequate supply of resident (affordable) housing.
- Intensification
- Blended
- Downtown Residences
- Attractive
- Creative
- Well-managed
- Human-scale
- Integrated
Blueprint: Housing – Issues, Perceptions and Recommendations

To have a house is to have a dwelling place, a "roof over one's head." To have a home is to have a place to live. Ideally, with this comes notions of stability, security, affordability and peace of mind. Having a home always implies the reality of living in a particular environment. Thus, for the citizens of Collingwood, the idea of housing means more than just having a place to live, it also means having a sense of place.

**Issues**

The existing housing situation is rapidly in danger of spiraling out of control. The Town as a whole does not yet appreciate the severity of the situation. Consider the following:

- Current housing stock (rental, sales) is insufficient to meet current demands for accommodation… people are forced to live in unaffordable situations— if they can actually find a place to live!
- The majority of these issues are not well-understood by the populace at large. While the need for affordability is well-recognized, the actual severity of the situation is only just becoming apparent. It needs to be better publicized and explained.
- Collingwood’s industrial sector is expanding with an anticipated 500 to 800 new jobs over the next five to ten years, yet there is currently a shortage of skilled labour. Industry therefore must recruit new workers from outside the area. Where will these new residents live? Will they be able to afford accommodation?
- The Regional tourism sector is expanding, especially with respect to the Intrawest development. According to the KPMG Economic Impact Study, Intrawest alone will create 3600 new full-time equivalent jobs at the destination resort. If current ratios continue to hold, that means 60% of these employees (approximately 2000 people) will live in Collingwood.
- Current housing issues are bad enough for the community as a whole, but they create special problems for those who are already disadvantaged— single-parents, those who do not have a middle-class income, seniors and disabled persons.
- Alternative housing possibilities are under-utilized. There is a definite need for intensification, and a number of alternatives are available. Granny-flats, accessory apartments, and encouraging residents to rent spare rooms and/or basements should all be high-priority items.

The current state of the housing situation gives cause for significant concern. Principally the issue can be characterized as one of high demand and low supply. High demand for the limited number of houses and rental units means that the cost of these units is pushed upward, making them less and less affordable for the majority of the Town’s residents. Beyond this, there is an insufficient number of all types of dwelling spaces for the current and future residents of Collingwood.

**Issues and Perceptions**

The following chart, based on the 1996 Statistics Canada Data provides some preliminary data on housing and related issues in Collingwood:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Number of Occupied Private Dwellings in Collingwood</th>
<th>6095</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number Owner</td>
<td>4025 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number Rented</td>
<td>2070 (34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Gross Rent – Collingwood</td>
<td>$608/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Gross Rent – Province</td>
<td>$679/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross Rent Spending 30% or more or Household income on shelter costs</td>
<td>1105</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some additional data:

1999 Estimates put the split between owned and rented as roughly the same… 6251 occupied private dwellings, 4,010 owned, 2,141 rented… (Source: Financial Post). Note the trend towards increased rental.

Human Resources Development Canada also makes note that:
“Collingwood... had a greater percentage of tenants spending 30% or more of their household income on shelter costs as compared to Ontario... [53% in Collingwood, 44% for Ontario]... an indication that the household income for many may be insufficient for the cost of shelter in the region based on current pricing levels.”

As of December 1999, our rental vacancy rate was 1.8%. A recent review of classified ads showed fewer than 10 rental vacancies.

As of October 2000 the average price of a residential home in Collingwood was over $147,000. With a 5% down payment requirement that means that a family income needs to be approximately $54,700 to qualify for a mortgage based on current (October 2000) interest rates.

Labour Force and Related

Let us quickly review the earlier discussion on Intrawest’s Economic Impact Analysis (KPMG) Study:

- Note that these figures do not include other naturally occurring growth / other projects.
- Approximately 60% of Collingwood’s labour force reside in town with another 30% residing in Clearview, Town of the Blue Mountains and Wasaga Beach.
- 56% of Blue Mountain’s employees currently live in Collingwood and 23.2% live in Clearview, Town of the Blue Mountains and Wasaga Beach.

The Intrawest development poses the most immediate and greatest concern for housing/rental shortage. The Manufacturing Sector Strategy identified the need for an additional 500-800 new employees over the next 5 years resulting from “proposed industrial expansion and attrition.”

The Manufacturing Sector Strategy also identified that 65% of Collingwood’s manufacturing sector workers reside out of Town.

Long Term and Present Needs

| POPULATION/HOUSING UNIT PROJECTIONS |
|---|---|---|
| YEAR | POPULATION | HOUSING UNITS |
| 1991 | 20,000 | 7,415 |
| 1996 | 20,805 | 7,821 |
| 1999 | 21,497 | 8,141 |
| 2009 | 24,838 | 9,591 |
| 2021 | 30,357 | 11,841 |

Source: Official Plan of the Town of Collingwood, Draft, April 2000

The issues at hand with housing – resident affordability, design, the need for intensification, among others – are all interconnected: a community that seriously considers intensification not only creates more housing stock (for rent or purchase), but also tackles the issue of affordability. The design of developments or individual homes can do the same. The following represents a thumbnail review of the issues along with Vision 2020’s recommendations.

Housing: Ensuring an Appropriate Pace for Development

Many citizens talked about urban sprawl, building too much too fast (overreacting), esthetics, desire to maintain small town feel, architectural controls, trees, trees and trees, property appearance and in some cases historic look and feel. Yet diversity is encouraged and we want to build for all economic levels. People also recognized the need to build for singles and families (middle class) to preserve our future dynamic. We must ensure that these values are taken into account with all future planning.

Availability of Adequate Housing Stock

There are other issues to consider as well. For example, employees that work in Collingwood but live outside of the community have to commute to Town. As industry of one sort or another increases the
number of commuters can, in the absence of sufficient housing, also be expected to increase.

A situation of this sort then, in turn, means that there are more cars on the road, which leads to traffic congestion. Excess traffic then, in turn, affects the quality of roads (they require repairs more frequently), the availability of parking and the quality of the environment (from increased automotive emissions).

On top of these issues, there is also an added impact on community, as the disparity between the daytime population of the community (workers and residents) and its nighttime population begins to increase. Put simply, workers who drive a long distance to a community and then drive a long distance out of it in the evening do not feel as much a part of the community at large. It is difficult to quantify the net result of this disaffection; however, it can reasonably be supposed that an increase in the number of people who feel disconnected to the community as a whole could result in a dilution of community values and goals.

**Affordability**

HRDC reports that approximately 70% of families in Collingwood have a household income of under $49,999. The average household income in Collingwood is $42,529, and the median household income is $34,151 (versus a provincial average of $54,291 and $45,155 respectively). HRDC makes special note that:

...The Town of Collingwood [has] household incomes that are noticeably lower than the Province. This is especially evident in the $10,000 to $39,999 range...

Due to a lack of available housing and rental stock, the value of dwelling space is artificially high. The following figures are from January 2000:

**Average Rental Costs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-bed</th>
<th>2-bed</th>
<th>3-bed</th>
<th>4-bed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apt.</td>
<td>$500</td>
<td>$650</td>
<td>$725</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplex</td>
<td>$695</td>
<td>$750</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>$725</td>
<td>$850</td>
<td>$950</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condo</td>
<td>$850</td>
<td>$950</td>
<td>$1000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source – Town of Collingwood

The above data, however, may already be changing. A sample of eight Saturday newspapers (roughly 1 per month) between January 1, 2000 and August 4, 2000 yielded the following rental costs for apartments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-bed</th>
<th>2-bed</th>
<th>3-bed</th>
<th>4-bed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apt.</td>
<td>$418</td>
<td>$578</td>
<td>$666</td>
<td>$787</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Vision 2020 Media Survey, August 2000

The vast majority of respondents to the Supreme Ruler survey made mention of either affordable housing or affordable rental accommodation in their Supreme Ruler submissions with **193 Responses**. Among the responses were the following comments:

“A certain percentage of all new development should be priced within a more affordable range."

“We need affordable but attractive housing.”

“We need more affordable housing both houses and apartments. ... There needs to be a better mix between the number of affordable homes and apartments and the higher priced resort style homes and condos.”

“Consider the “per capita” income of existing residents and build accordingly. Remember to keep middle class in mind.”

“We need to house a large number of people affordably. As in all things, moderation is the key – let’s have a mixture of densities throughout the area ... More exclusive – I think not! How will ... people afford “more exclusive housing” making $10.00 tops an hour?”

Vision 2020 understands that developers will always respond to market demand; affordable housing requires **intervention**. Our existing rental stock is not only depleted but also aging and both government and market conditions for the development of traditional forms of affordable housing simply do not exist. Therefore, Vision 2020 believes that solutions to these
problems lay in the Town implementing a number of recommendations.

▲ Promote and encourage the development of housing for seniors that provides for a continuum of needs from independent living to full care.

▲ Establish targets and monitor/revise annually. Develop a properly applied program of residential intensification in order to satisfy the need to develop affordably, to provide access to the housing market for new homeowners, to develop with minimal environmental impacts and, most importantly, to avoid ghettoization by weaving affordable housing into the existing fabric of the community.

▲ Aggressively promote and encourage residential intensification including additions and/or conversions to provide for accessory units, granny flats/garden suites and duplexes which also acknowledge the need for strict by-laws pertaining to property standards.

▲ Establish a housing registry that matches landlords and tenants, identifies opportunities for intensification, works with industry and other regional municipalities in setting affordable resident housing targets, monitors outcomes and provides consulting, perhaps as in above.

▲ Require that where housing cannot be developed within a resident affordability range, that a cash-in-lieu contribution must be made and to be used toward the creation of resident housing.

▲ Create a housing authority that manages creation of resident housing including the management of cash-in-lieu contributions.

▲ Ensure that resident housing is inter-mixed into the normal marketplace, and into a variety of residential zones.

▲ Set annual targets for new resident housing units required based on the assumption that Collingwood must house 60% of its workforce within the town limits.

▲ Encourage increased residential uses/occupancies in and near to the downtown core.

▲ Create or encourage the creation of a task force whose mandate would be to:
  • inventory apartments in the downtown core
  • develop plans and ideas to encourage property owners to improve buildings to achieve stable occupancies
  • look at other opportunities for residential development in the core
  • review and make recommendations pertaining to property standards including enhancement/change to rear access/parking/appearance and inclusion of green spaces.
Encourage a properly applied program of residential intensification that aims to create additional rental units around the community. Ensure that such efforts aim towards:
- Weaving affordable housing throughout the community
- Are well integrated in terms of design and do not negatively impact upon a given neighbourhood
- Are undertaken with minimal impact on the environment

Many existing rental housing units are dilapidated. Therefore, the Town is encouraged to enforce property standards throughout the community so as to (a) enhance the Town’s overall image; and, (b) promote greater acceptance of “affordable” housing be it owned or rented.

Investigate options re: Admiral school to be used as a “lodge” for transitional/seasonal worker housing or, affordable year round housing

Establish a time restricted, transitional housing development for employed workers new to the community using the concept of a lodge-type facility with common areas and private rooms.

Thoroughly investigate the legalities and logistics of other forms of intervention including:
- having mixed densities in all new developments that include a percentage of units geared to lower price ranges (i.e., row housing, town-homes, apartments, size restricted or alternative construction);
- have the municipality acquire land (land-banking) and place deed restrictions on future sale, development and occupancy
- in addition to housing, land-banking can also be used for future community facilities and for land control purposes.
- control the number of permits issued annually for homes of differing values;
- requiring that certain homes (i.e., in-fill homes or homes of a certain value or size) incorporate an accessory unit;
- limit size of in-fill homes to a certain percentage of the size (i.e. + or - 20%) of any previous dwelling.

Address housing needs on a regional level with area municipalities.

Actively lobby large employers (such as Intrawest) to provide for employee housing.

Design Issues

Design is a broad topic that covers a number of issues. In talking about “the look” of housing related issues, respondents addressed issues of aesthetics, landscaping and the beautification of the community as a whole.

Establish a type of planning body that would collect examples of residential design that encompass Collingwood’s vision for future development, and that could then assist developers in accessing examples of innovative, successful and profitable designs for both single family and multi-residential development.

Prohibit gated communities.

Ensure that there are height-restrictions in place for all new multiplex dwellings that are in-keeping with the Town’s vision for development on a human scale.
▲ Prohibit any new high-rise developments over three stories in the Harbourlands and Downtown core.

▲ Foster a stronger sense of community connectivity and livability by requiring trail connections, bike lanes, sidewalks, parkland and visual green space site lines in all new developments.

▲ Ensure that new developments require that wires be buried.

▲ Promote the “wiring” of all new homes for high-speed internet, media and other emerging technologies.

▲ Establish stringent policies around tree cutting/planting and other environmental impacts on development.

▲ Promote the use of environmentally-friendly development, including alternative building materials, energy, waste reduction.

▲ Ensure that green-space, trail and bike-lane requirements in new communities are non-negotiable.

Heritage

▲ Establish a LACAC to designate both individual homes and entire neighbourhoods as heritage districts to preserve what’s best about Collingwood!

▲ Have a planning committee that in addition to council members, has members of the public including committees such as Vision 2020, LACAC and other relevant bodies participating.

▲ As far as legally possible, and by every means available, promote the use of architectural controls and landscaping plans in all new developments to respect and reflect the existing heritage and design of Collingwood.

Municipal amalgamation started with the free bus trips. I don’t remember all of the details, but it started with the bus trips, and then with the paddlewheel boat we purchased and renamed *The Gateway Getaway* (all we had to do was reverse two letters in the first word, gateway, to come up with second). The first bus trip went up to the Intrawest Village and it was free. Oh, we weren’t thinking of the well-being of the Village, we were thinking of ourselves, trying to lure tourists out of the village at Blue Mountain ... liked the deal, because the bus also brought our own people up to its restaurants and boutiques. Things worked out so well that we started another bus tour to downtown Wasaga Beach, once again free. Wasaga reciprocated with its own bus to Collingwood to take people to its new *Creatures of the Sea* marina. Then we decided to nix passenger fees for the Gateway Getaway paddlewheel (although passengers had to pay for food and beverages on board) as it went up and down the shoreline to Thornbury and Meaford in the west and Wasaga in the east.

Business was so good for all of our communities that our mayors and councils began meeting for regional pow-wows. And, wherever the meetings were held, they always made a point of arriving by bus or boat.

Their first major accomplishment was the Great Bay Caravan in 2004, an annual regional festival that’s still going strong, each and every June long weekend. In fact, it gets better each year. The mix is eclectic: Last summer Collingwood contributed jazz and abstract art in its Cultural Centre and a rave at *Terminal Sound*, the Terminal Mountain night club. Wasaga, of course, hosted its Beach Carnival, and the resort at Blue once again held its Extreme Sport and Fashion Show. Collingwood, of course, has always had wonderful festivals of its own (as do our neighbours), but when we all started working together things were taken to a new level in terms of magnitude and visibility.

Regional organizations became more and more important as agendas expanded to include issues such as transportation, housing, service and the environment. Talks became collaborative. Information was shared. Municipal departments and community organizations began working together on other issues of common interest.

One day, at a regional meeting, the mayors were huddled in a corner, discussing how all the good will between the communities got started, and they agreed that it was with that first free transit ride from Collingwood to the mountain. And now – *and this is absolutely true* – these mayors have a little paper weight on their desks that reads: The Bus Stops Here.
Goals / Key Principles

There are a number of Guiding Principles exemplifying Collingwood's role in the region. Vision 2020 believes that the Town of Collingwood should aim towards the following in all regional matters:

- Collaboration
- Openness
- Friendship
- Being Complimentary vs. Competitive
- Sharing
- Fairness
- Forward thinking
- Environmental responsibility
Blueprint: Regionalism – Issues, Perceptions and Recommendations

Issues

Currently, Collingwood's role in the region is characterized by both an employment and services-oriented economy. The industrial and retail sector's in Collingwood provide jobs for a large number of residents from neighboring communities. As well, Collingwood public schools and high schools provide educational services for numerous students from Wasaga Beach and Clearview. On a day to day basis, the borders that separate municipality from municipality (or County from County) are becoming ever more vague. It is politics that keeps these lines present. In this environment, there are a number of issues present:

- There is a need for better cooperation among municipalities on matters of regional infrastructure, tourism planning, housing and transportation.
- Lack of clearly articulated goals for the region, lack of benchmarks, a sense of direction or even a consistent definition of what is meant by the region.
- There is a need to put aside past rivalries
- There is a decided need for the Town to take a more proactive stance to developing regional ties with neighbouring municipalities.
- There is an increasing sense that if area municipalities don't start working together on a regular basis then Provincial legislation may force this point.

▲ Work to develop a sense of cooperation among municipalities based on guiding principles of:
  - Collaboration
  - Openness
  - Friendship
  - Sharing
  - Fairness
  - Forward thinking
  - Environmental responsibility
  - Complimentary vs. competitive

▲ Ensure that the concept of "the region" is clearly and consistently defined and further, that this concept is consistently marketed within the region. This might be an appropriate task for the Heads of Council Committee to formalize.

▲ Ensure that better inter-regional communication (among counties, councils, committees and key organizations) is part of a plan for improved regional ties.

▲ Ensure that better communication between government and citizens is a priority - on matters of regionalism, and on all issues of governance.

▲ Establish an inter-regional committee composed of council members, department heads and key organizations (Chambers, individuals, environmental and citizens groups, etc.) from each of the region's municipalities, as well as from County, Provincial and Federal government. Have this committee work together on matters of regional planning and other shared issues.

▲ Devise a means for better negotiating county issues as they affect the Georgian Triangle - ensure that the county line is not an impediment to regional growth, development and collaboration.

▲ Continue to promote the costs and savings associated with sharing services and/or amalgamation with one or more of the bordering municipalities. Consider using the local Public Utilities Commission as a model for such collaborative efforts.
Better publicize examples of regional cooperation. Ensure examples of regional cooperation are part of educational projects. Study means through which regional cooperation could be enhanced.

Support "issue-specific" regional meetings and initiatives (for their own sake, and as a means to further enhance regional cooperation).

Regional Events and Tourism Initiatives

Vision 2020 believes that one of the best ways to foster a sense of regional community is to develop one or more regionally-based tourism initiatives. A number of Supreme Rulers, notably those in the younger demographic segments, felt the same way. This suggests that a regional element in policy development must also be complemented by broader, more culturally-rich, aspects of regionalism.

"I suggest activities and events should be done with towns surrounding us. Little races, competitions (that are fun) should be done either town against town or towns mixed into groups, it doesn’t matter!"

Support the development of a number of regional tourism initiatives, such as:
- collaborating on (or promoting) a "fun" regional initiative - such as a weekend pass for various sites in the Georgian Triangle, or a Caravan-style passport for entry into a wide range of different sites, etc.
- support a port-to-port boat link to commute between port towns of the Georgian Triangle, waterfront communities.

Regional - Transportation

Vision 2020 believes that priority must be given to developing a regional transportation initiative. The “draw” of the Village at Blue Mountain, the need to reduce automotive traffic in the Georgian Triangle, and the large number of individuals whose places of work and residence cross municipal (and county) boundaries... are all reasons why the regional aspect of transportation must be attended better understood and dealt with.

Regional transportation link – Georgian Triangle bus route, core-to-core and linking “capital” towns. This should be a high priority, with key emphasis on negotiating a link with the new Village at the earliest possible time.

As stated in a previous recommendation, the continued civic operation of the airport must include support from other regional municipalities.

Continue to develop working relationships with regard to by-pass issues with area municipalities, County and Provincial governments.

Continue to work in collaboration with other municipalities to better access funding for regionally-based transportation initiatives.

Region - Environment

As with all aspects of municipal planning, environmental responsibility in a regional context is of paramount importance. Indeed there are a number of environmental issues spread beyond political boundaries or municipal and county border-lines. This makes them transboundary in nature. Many survey respondents recognized the need for action in this respect.

“Wasaga and Collingwood would share recycling facilities and many other resources due to their proximity. Definitely
be involved in environmental and governmental issues outside boundaries.”

Broad-based environmental concerns require broad-based solutions. In addition to making environmental responsibility a key goal of all regional initiatives, Vision 2020 proposes a number of more specific recommendations.

- Encourage municipal departments and local organizations to collaborate with other municipalities on trans-boundary environmental issues. Support and enhance existing regional efforts on environmental issues.

- Use the precautionary principle when negotiating environmentally-sensitive issues with regional partners.

- Support the establishment of a regional sorting centre for recyclable materials (so as to increase the number of materials that can be recycled).

- Ensure that the values expressed elsewhere in this report in support of the environment apply to any and all initiatives involving other municipalities. Ensure that these values are incorporated into a regional planning model.

- Continue to work to enhance and market regional trail and bike-lane initiatives and use these as a model of regional cooperation.

- Direct Collus to offer green-sourced energy to its regional consumers.

Regional - Housing

The region-wide nature of employment means that housing is also a key issue for the area. There is a demonstrated need for affordable resident housing and rental stock in Collingwood and surrounding area. With an influx of new workers coming into the area – both to work in Collingwood and the other municipalities – present day shortages in housing will only be intensified. It is important that the issue be understood in a regional context, because it will require the combined effort of area governments to resolve the present and anticipated shortages of available stock.

“We need an inter-regional committee that ignores the municipal boundaries and co-ordinates resources, shares information and plans - in all likelihood Thornbury, Meaford, Wasaga Beach and Stayner will be impacted by housing needs, traffic concerns - this committee should try to rise above politics, but take concerns back to their municipalities on a regular basis.”

“However -- we must respond to the pressing [regional] housing and infrastructure problems ASAP!”

- Promote regional efforts to work on the issue of affordable housing, and ensure that it is understood as a regional issue. Lobby other municipalities for the same.

Regional – Other Considerations

- Encourage the Collingwood Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Collingwood/BIA to enhance strategic links with area Chambers and BIA’s. Promote the strengthening of Georgian Triangle Inter-Regional Committees.
▲ Ensure levels of service re: Police, Fire, ambulance are maintained and/or improved during upcoming growth.

▲ Support the Collingwood General and Marine Hospital recommendations pertaining to the need for expanded services (additional beds, facilities, monies, etc.). Work with area municipalities to ensure their continued support for this.

▲ Establish and/or support regional relationships pertaining to information services (libraries, web-pages, etc.).

▲ Establish, enhance or promote regional relationships among schools, community groups, museum and cultural facilities.

▲ Encourage municipal groups, organizations and service clubs to incorporate the notion of enhanced regional relations in their Mission statements and policies.

▲ Support the notion of a “border-less” Georgian Triangle.

▲ Develop a regional marketing strategy with other municipal and relevant business or organization partners.
Chapter 8: Finance

November 29, 2020

A wise person once said that success is measured by the capacity for innovation. If that’s the case, then Collingwood is a Town deserving of its good fortune. Not only has the Town been able to raise the funds for all of its revitalization projects, but in doing so, it has learned to be creative in the face of sometimes tough economic realities.

In the year 2000, a Collingwood Town Councillor stood up and said, “Just how in the name of Sir Admiral Collingwood are we going to pay for this so-called Town of Tomorrow?” Fortunately for all of us he was outvoted by the cautious common sense of most of the others. Then a very precious mix of time, money, volunteerism and just a pinch of creativity was stirred together to cook up a business plan that has continued to pay dividends every year since.

First, Council successfully lobbied for a reduction in provincially set municipal property tax rates. The Fair Tax program that emerged gave the taxpayers of Collingwood a big break. Just as important, it gave Council and the Town as a whole a taste of success. Although the property tax reduction didn’t deliver direct benefits to the Town, it did help to enhance the already good relations between the commercial and retail sector, the citizenry and government as a whole.

This was when the Town woke up to the idea of strategic partnerships, and began to collaborate on projects. The first well-publicised partnership with one of its long standing industries resulted in repainting the Collingwood Terminal building. That was followed quickly by a range of new or improved alliances involving community groups, the Downtown and several local corporations. Eventually, as a result of this partnering, our town became greener, and culturally richer.

The Town was, at this time, exploring another type of partnership: regionalism. Collingwood and its neighbours had already proven that teamwork could improve tourism and cultural activities. Could collaboration - a louder voice - work in terms of creating easier access to federal and provincial funding for affordable housing or perhaps environmental issues?

It was from those issue meetings that our present day Committee for Regional Affairs was born: To identify and distill a host of different ideas and concerns from our member communities, and to support and remedy them.

Municipal bonds, hospitality taxes and user fees were also introduced to help pay some of the costs of renewal projects. But the biggest source of aid came in the form of sweat from Collingwood’s Volunteer Army, an actual organization that runs itself much like the Scouts or Sea Cadets, and whose sole mandate is to serve as a volunteer corps for this town. The Volunteer Army is serious to the point that it issues shirts, hats and badges. So popular and famous are these items that tourists can buy replica ‘V/A’ clothing in a dozen of the Town’s retail outlets. Its membership has flourished, and today it numbers 1700 Collingwood men, women and children. Paraphrasing a famous U.S. President of more than a half century ago, it’s has adapted the motto: Ask not what Collingwood can do for you, ask only what you can do for Collingwood.

...which tells you that the capacity for innovation may be important, but in the end, it’s a Town’s citizens who make it rich.
To achieve the Peoples Vision for Collingwood, what sort of goals should the Town have when it comes to paying for the implementation of these visions? Vision 2020 believes the Town should be:

- Creative
- Intelligent / Wise
- Prudent
- Collaborative
- Daring
- Responsible
- Prepared
Blueprint: Finance – Issues, Perceptions and Recommendations

Issues

Currently, the Town faces a number of rather pressing issues when it comes to Finance. Among these:

- The Town has limited financial resources to spend on the type of grand projects that are needed.
- There is a perceived lack of understanding about how much various projects cost. People want a highway widened, but don't recognize the cost of doing this.
- The Town's property taxes in some sectors are out of sync with the assessments made in neighbouring communities as a result of Bill 79. Collingwood taxpayers want to hold the line on taxes.
- The Town has a limited number of possibilities when it comes to creating new fundraising mechanisms.
- The Town has to develop creative means to raise the money needed for visioning projects
- The Town has to develop better means to make use of the many capable and willing volunteers

A Shortage of Funds

Currently, the Town debenture limit sits at $25 million dollars. Against this, the Town’s debt sits somewhere in the area of $21 million dollars...

One of the challenges faced in implementing the Vision contained in this report is the fact that the sheer cost of many items is not well understood by the populace at large. For example, consider the following recent projects, or cost estimates for infrastructure work:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of a new set of stop lights</td>
<td>$70K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost to re-build an intersection</td>
<td>$400K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost to widen a highway from 2-4 lanes</td>
<td>$5 million/km</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost to repaint the Terminals</td>
<td>$100K est.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of a mural</td>
<td>$25-50 K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clearly, there is a need to look at novel ways in which to generate funds for the implementation of visioning projects. The existing lack of hard capital should not be taken as a reason not to implement projects; rather, it should be seen as an opportunity to investigate new ways of raising funds.

Taxation

“Taxes are the price we pay for civilization” wrote Oliver Wendell Holmes.

Typically, Town funding for municipal projects has been derived primarily from property tax revenues. In Collingwood, however, much of these funds are currently being allocated towards paying down the Town debt, leaving the Town to resort to secondary sources of revenue, such as parking meter revenues and license and building fees.

The handling of tax related issues in the Town of the future will require work in two different directions: First, the Town must ensure that its property taxes are equitable with the region; second, it must ensure that there are efficient means of directing tax dollars into infrastructure projects, municipal visioning and renewal, and not debt repayment exclusively.

▲ Continue to publicize how tax dollars are spent - i.e. by using a published, user friendly format that clearly shows the breakdown of each tax dollar, and also provides comparative information for previous years’ tax structure. Provide this information on the Town's web-site as well.
Prepare a program to better educate citizens on the cost of government and its various initiatives (i.e. the cost to maintain roads, widen them, infrastructure and so on...).

Consider waiving (for a set period) increases in downtown property tax that come about as a result of restorative efforts (as an incentive to improve the downtown). Consider the development of an Incentive Fund.

Consider the development of an incentive program to encourage environmentally-friendly initiatives – i.e. using green-sourced power, increasing public green-space, etc., and recognize that there is a long range payback to these.

Explore a wide range of development incentives in order to facilitate development of harbourlands and waterfront initiatives (related to the development of small-scale commercial outlets, boutiques, restaurants).

Continue to lobby the Provincial Government to solve the problems associated with Bill 79 and give the Town the type of (Fair) tax relief that it had with Bill 73.

Seriously consider some form of tourist tax or levy - e.g. a bed tax on accommodations, or other form of levy on tourist attractions. Explore the development of a regional initiative in this respect.

Investigate the issues and possibilities behind lobbying the Provincial Government to allow a 1% regional sales tax to raise money for municipal visioning initiatives.

Develop a program to make better use of the many capable and willing volunteers who are interested in making a contribution to the community.

For example, currently municipal bonds are issued – but only to one holder at a time. The rationale, in part, relates to an attempt to discourage Town Hall from becoming like a bank – (imagine the line ups on the date that the bonds came due!) However, as one idea, how about seeing if this sort of service-related aspect of bond-sales and redemption could be handled by an outside firm? It’s not known if this is a possibility, but it is certainly worth investigating all the avenues that might be available.

Enhance and develop strategic partnerships between the Town, private sector and the community at large to implement projects - ensure that such partnerships have an eye to the overall "vision" for the Town's future.

Encourage working in conjunction with other municipalities to better access funding opportunities for matters that will benefit the region (e.g. airport, roads).

Consider the development of a voluntary contribution initiative to help fund initiatives-of-one's-own-choosing. Provide a tax receipt for this - where possible.

Funding for V2020 Initiatives

Naturally other means of generating revenue for visioning projects will have to be looked at. Some possibilities here include the building of strategic partnerships between the Town and the private sector, the establishment of a Town lottery, the revisiting of a municipal bond program, the improvement of voluntary donation systems for specific projects and more.
Consider additional alternative ways in which municipal bonds could be used to raise funds for the community.

Investigate the issues surrounding a Town lottery.

Continue to partner with community groups to fundraise for specific objectives.

In the future, consider using budgetary surpluses to create specific funds for a variety of initiatives, including heritage restoration and improvement, housing, environment, and so on. When they are available (they’re not now) allocate budgetary monies for these funds.

Another good example is the issue of development charges. Where other municipalities have increased the charges they levy, using these funds to finance their various initiatives, Collingwood’s charges have not undergone a significant increase in a number of years. Perhaps it is time to review this. Indeed, Vision 2020 supports the idea of development charges in philosophy, but recognizes that there will always be differing perceptions of what a fair or good charge might be.

Potential solutions that come from these and other areas must be reviewed by Town and the community at large (including the business community).

Prepare a report detailing the costs and savings associated with sharing services and/or amalgamation with one or more of the bordering municipalities.

Be aware of, and prepared to act on, accessing funding sources/programs that become available.

Consider the establishment of additional development/building fees as a way to generate revenue for projects.

Be proactive and encourage new industry, that fits the Town vision, to relocate to Collingwood.

Support, in principle, the notion of user-pay programs for municipal services. Review plans for user-fees for municipal services (garbage, ice-rink, etc.). Where feasible, consider restructuring these (e.g. move waste management to a buck-a-bag system), and remove these from tax bill, and base on use only. Consider other possible user-fees — e.g. airport. In all cases make note of issues surrounding user-fees and attend to them in advance.

Municipal Matters

There are other ways in which financial issues can be explored or addressed.

For example, Vision 2020, as well as many survey respondents, recognize the possibility of fiscal advantages associated with amalgamation and service sharing. We believe these are the types of things that need to be explored in greater detail.
Something to Think About...
In Ontario, for example, the new government has promised to reduce the personal income tax rate by 30 percent. As a consequence, indirect taxes will increase significantly. A move to user fees in almost every area of public service is now underway, a shift which may be inequitable for lower-income groups. This suggests that while there is some convergence of political parties around the need for indirect taxes, ideological differences arise when distributive consequences are considered.3

As stated in other recommendations, utilize cash-in-lieu fees (green space, housing, etc.) to establish specific funds for related community initiatives.

Alternatives
A key issue for the future will be the need to devise newer and more sophisticated means of finance-costing. There will also be a need to better understand the full extent of the economic situation in Collingwood. This may in turn require more elaborate (broader) means of measuring community well-being.

Be proactive - investigate new forms of finance costing. See if there are any alternatives that can be applied at the municipal level. Lobby provincial and federal governments for new methods where they are environmentally and economically sensible.

Prepare a snap-shot of municipal expenses based on “true-cost” accounting (cost of business inclusive of externalities).

Volunteerism
Many Supreme Rulers indicated not only a willingness, but an active desire to volunteer their skills and time in bettering the community. Volunteerism has the added benefit of building community pride and cohesiveness.

As initiatives are identified, solicit individual and/or group community volunteers to participate in planning, execution and maintenance of projects.

Part Three
Blueprint: Starting with the Present; Implementing the People’s Vision

It is one thing to survey people, find out what they want, even make recommendations. It is another thing to implement these recommendations. The Vision 2020 Committee recognizes that the task of translating 200 plus initiatives into a vision for the future requires planning in several stages. In some cases, the recommendations and initiatives that are outlined in Blueprint Collingwood will mean significant change to the Town, its government and the community at large.

Bearing this in mind, we understand that the central question that emerges after a reading of this document and its contents is “how can this be done?” The Vision 2020 Committee does not have an answer to that question.

Rather, we see a number of possibilities. We cannot predict the route that council will follow in implementing this People’s vision. However, we do feel qualified to offer some advice as to how to go about initiating the various tenets of change that we have put forth.

For one, the grand and holistic vision of the Town of Tomorrow can be tackled in stages. In other words, the process can be handled in various parts. As with any vision, clarity and resolution are key elements. The Vision for Tomorrow that we are submitting to you is on the horizon today. In order to reach this not too distant shore we must be sure to orient ourselves appropriately, move in the right direction and with the right path.

In coming up with our plan for the future of Collingwood we thought it best to outline the beginning steps of this journey to the future. We attempted to put ourselves in Council’s shoes and devise an implementation strategy for the next steps. We hope this strategy – which we have titled the “7-Point Plan” – will be of use in laying the foundation for the Blueprint and its actualization.

There will be a point when we look back to this stage of the process and marvel at the fact that “this is where it all started.” We will be the citizens of Collingwood 2020, and our efforts today will be our shared history and enthusiasm, our memories of a willingness to go out on a dare and say “yes, it can be done.”

The 7-Point Plan is our final recommendation to Council. On behalf of the residents and friends of Collingwood we thank you for your vision in inviting this process to fruition. We welcome your leadership as we prepare for Tomorrow.
Blueprint: Implementing the People’s Vision; A 7-Point Plan

The 7-Point Plan

1. Adopt the eight (8) core values as decision-making cornerstones.

2. Establish a permanent Vision 2020 Committee of Council with key sector and municipal representation to take forward the Vision 2020 Blueprint for Collingwood.

3. Hire an experienced Community Development expert whose primary function is to direct implementation of the Vision 2020 Blueprint for Collingwood. Ensure that Vision 2020 participates in the recruitment and selection process.

4. Establish priorities, time frames, costs, areas of responsibility and feedback/monitoring benchmarks for Blueprint recommendations.

5. Integrate the Vision 2020 Blueprint for Collingwood recommendations into the Official and Strategic Plans. Identify any areas of incompatibility and initiate a thorough policy review as appropriate.

6. Implement recommendations (ongoing).

7. Carry out an annual, community-based monitoring program to measure change and predict needs with both input and feedback to and from the community at large.
Blueprint: Thank you.

Part Four
## Vision 2020 Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marg Scheben-Edey</td>
<td>Vision 2020 Chairperson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgian Triangle</td>
<td>Economic Development Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob Cook</td>
<td>Vision 2020 Co-Chair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Downtown Collingwood/ BIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terry Geddies, Mayor</td>
<td>Town of Collingwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sonny Foley, Councillor</td>
<td>Town of Collingwood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Mantrop</td>
<td>Downtown Collingwood/ BIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anita Hunter</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bob McMaster</td>
<td>First Street</td>
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## Resource People

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catherine Durrant</td>
<td>Town of Collingwood Economic Development Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan Nicholson</td>
<td>Downtown Collingwood/ BIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Pask</td>
<td>Vision 2020 Co-ordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meghan McEachern</td>
<td>Co-op student and part-time assistant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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## Staff

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dunc Hawkins</td>
<td>Economic Development Advisory Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margot Minardi</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victor Zamin</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Sheffer</td>
<td>Resource</td>
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We would also like to gratefully acknowledge the participation of Past Committee members who contributed significantly to this project:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shelley Houston</td>
<td>Georgian Triangle Economic Development Corporation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dunc Hawkins</td>
<td>Economic Development Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Joseph Sheffer</td>
<td>Resource</td>
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Blueprint: The Faces of Vision 2020

The Committee gratefully acknowledges the participation and assistance of so many contributors:

John Pinder
Human Resources Development Canada

Paul Bonwick
Member of Parliament, Simcoe-Grey

Town of Collingwood:
-Department heads and staff
-Committee Chairs

Collingwood Town Council (especially Sonny Foley for his vast library of books, videos and reports!)

Downtown Collingwood/BIA

Chamber of Commerce

Georgian Triangle Economic Development Corporation

Municipalities of Ste. Jovite and Mont Tremblant

Intrawest and Blue Mountain Resorts

Downtown Merchants for allowing signs

Local Media for their continuous interest and support – especially the Enterprise Bulletin, Collingwood Connection, The Peak and Rogers Cable

Michael Vance; Mammoth Lakes, California

Georgian Triangle Development Institute (Conferences and Materials)

Michele Rich, Environment Network

Wayne Cole

John Knox

Chris McCormick

Alan Law, Trent University

Rhythm Communications

Grant Internet Communications

Artists:
Alex MacLeod, Cheri-Lynn Reithmer, George Hately and John Haines
Jay Wilson, Theatre Collingwood

Larry Irwin

Darius Vaiciunas

Area municipalities who participated in our meetings, workshops and gatherings, and who provided information and support to our work.

Tim Hortons, without whom we, exhausted, would have fallen asleep on the job long, long ago

Our family, friends and co-workers who put up with the long hours we spent away from our homes and jobs.

And lastly, but most importantly, to the Supreme Rulers: the thousands of people who participated in this process of discovery. Your voices have given rise to a new tomorrow.