

City of Owen Sound
Official Plan
Background Study

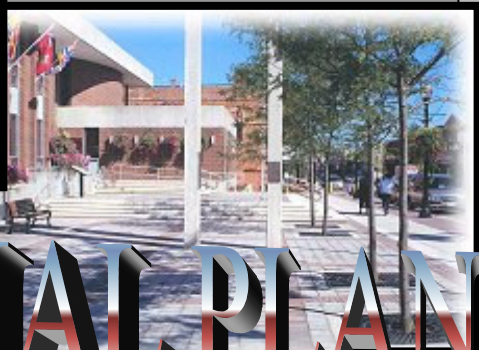
Submitted To: The City of Owen Sound

Submitted By:

The Biglieri Group Ltd

In association with:

R.E. Millward & Associates Ltd
Will Dunning Inc
Mark Engineering
Gamsby and Mannerow Limited
Saar Environmental Limited
Clara Consulting
Bluewater Design & Development



OFFICIAL PLAN BACKGROUND STUDY



City of Owen Sound Official Plan Background Study

October 2003

Submitted to: The City of Owen Sound

Submitted by: **The Biglieri Group Ltd**

In association with:

R.E. Millward & Associates Ltd

Will Dunning Inc

Mark Engineering

Gamsby and Mannerow Limited

Saar Environmental Limited

Clara Consulting

Bluewater Design & Development



Table of contents

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
2	INTRODUCTION.....	5
2.1	Purpose of the Official Plan Background Study	5
2.2	Overview of this Report.....	6
3	DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS.....	7
3.1	Demographic Overview	7
3.1.1	Households.....	8
3.1.2	Families.....	9
3.2	Socio-Economic Profile.....	9
3.2.1	Incomes	9
3.2.2	Housing Costs	11
3.3	Population Growth.....	12
4	REGIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL CONTEXTS FOR LAND USE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN OWEN SOUND	15
4.1	Regional Initiatives	15
4.1.1	Grey County Official Plan	15
4.2	Provincial Initiatives.....	16
4.2.1	Provincial Policy Statement review	16
4.2.2	Smart Growth.....	17
4.2.3	Brownfield Legislation	18
4.2.4	Ontarians with Disabilities Act.....	19
4.3	Federal Initiatives	22
4.3.1	Infrastructure Canada Program	22
4.3.2	National Brownfield Strategy	23
5	LAND USE.....	25

TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



5.1	Current Policy Context.....	25
5.2	Trends and Issues.....	25
5.2.1	Residential Housing Development and Housing Needs Forecast.....	25
5.2.2	Commercial and Industrial development.....	31
5.2.3	Urban Growth Management	32
5.2.4	Educational Facilities.....	34
5.2.5	Development Charges.....	36
5.3	Opportunities and Challenges	38
6	URBAN DESIGN	41
6.1	Current Policy Context.....	41
6.2	Trends and Initiatives.....	42
6.3	Challenges and Opportunities	44
7	CULTURAL HERITAGE	47
7.1	Current Policy Context.....	47
7.2	Trends and Issues.....	52
7.3	Challenges and Opportunities	54
8	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	57
8.1	Current Policy Context.....	57
8.2	Trends and Issues.....	59
8.2.1	A Natural Heritage System	59
8.2.2	Designing the Natural Heritage System.....	60
8.2.3	Management of the Natural Heritage System.....	63
8.2.4	Owen Sound Character	64
8.2.5	Owen Sound Ecology	67
8.2.6	Natural Heritage System Designation.....	71
8.3	Challenges and Opportunties	72

TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



9	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM.....	77
9.1	Current Policy Context.....	77
9.2	Trends and Issues.....	83
9.3	Opportunities and Challenges	83
10	RECREATION.....	87
10.1	Current Policy Context.....	87
10.2	Trends and Issues.....	91
10.2.1	Recreation	91
10.2.2	Parks and Open Space.....	92
10.2.3	Trails	93
10.3	Challenges and Opportunties	93
11	TRANSPORTATION	97
11.1	Current Policy Context.....	97
11.2	Trends and Issues.....	99
11.2.1	Roads.....	99
11.2.2	Transit	107
11.2.3	Port.....	108
11.2.4	Airport.....	109
11.3	Challenges and opportunities	111
12	SERVICING AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE.....	113
12.1	Current Policy Context.....	113
12.2	Trends and Issues.....	113
12.2.1	Water Supply and Treatment	114
12.2.2	Wastewater Treatment	115
12.2.3	Surface Water Management.....	116
12.2.4	Solid Waste Management	117
12.2.5	Nutrient Management	119

TEAM OWEN SOUND



12.3	Challenges and Opportunities	120
13	KEY DIRECTIONS FOR THE OFFICIAL PLAN	123
13.1	Planning for High Growth	123
13.2	Land Use Adequacy	124
13.3	Recommended Official Plan Directions	124
13.3.1	A Place in the Region	124
13.3.2	New Areas for Development	125
13.3.3	Official Plan Policies	128
13.4	Conclusion	135

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Highlights of provincial Brownfield legislation
Appendix B	Recommendations of the National Brownfield re-development strategy
Appendix C	Environmental Impact Assessment Criteria
Appendix D	Ecological Survey of the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve
Appendix E	Natural Heritage System Format Example
Appendix F	Supplementary Planting for Sydenham River Corridor and Linkage to Adjacent Natural Areas
Appendix G	Characteristics of Urban Road Classifications
Appendix H	Comments received at Public Information Center

TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



List of Tables

Table 1 Population, 1981 to 2001 7
Table 2 Distribution of Population by Age Group, 1981 and 2001 8
Table 3 Average Number of Persons Per Household, 1981 and 2001 8
Table 4 Non-Family Persons as a Percentage of the Population, 1981 and 2001 9
Table 5 Families With Two Adults Versus Lone Parent Families, 1981 and 2001 9
Table 6 Household Incomes, 1981 to 1996 10
Table 7 Average Home Values and Rents, 1996 11
Table 8 Per Cent of Home Owners and Tenants With Affordability Problems, 1996) 11
Table 9 Projected Population of the City of Owen Sound under Three Scenarios 13
Table 10 Housing Tenure, 1981 and 2001 26
Table 11 Housing Stock by Structural Type, 2001 26
Table 12 Housing Stock by Period of Construction, 2001 27
Table 13 Dwellings Units in Needs of Repair, 1996 27
Table 14 Potential Housing Requirements using “Share of Growth” Projection 28
Table 15 Potential Housing Requirements in Owen Sound, slow growth 29
Table 16 Potential Housing Requirements in Owen Sound, economic revival 30
Table 17 Summary of Projections - Potential Housing Requirements in Owen Sound . 30
Table 18 Georgian College: Estimated Growth 35
Table 19 Typical Right-Of-Way Widths 103
Table 20 Aircraft Movements 110

List of Maps

Map 1 Location
Map 2 Existing Land Use Map
Map 3 Significant Development Map
Map 4 Heritage Inventory
Map 5 Greenlands and Water Courses
Map 6 Southwestern Region Ecological Site Districts
Map 7 Park Trails Master Plan
Map 8 Parks, Open Space, Sport Fields and Neighbourhoods
Map 9 Road System
Map 10 Connecting Links
Map 11 Missing Links
Map 12 Truck Routes
Map 13 Transit Routes
Map 14 Watermain Inventory
Map 15 Sanitary Sewer Inventory
Map 16 Storm Sewer Inventory
Map 17 Constraints
Map 18 Growth Options

TEAM OWEN SOUND



City of Owen Sound Official Plan Background Study

TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The people of Owen Sound want a place to live with the highest quality of life. They want families to stay in the community. They want the city to grow as a regional centre and a desirable destination for tourism and recreation.

Building a successful city means making choices about the future that reflect priorities. This report sets out the background information for making choices about a future land use plan for Owen Sound. The City's current land use plan is approaching the end of its lifetime; a new plan will soon be developed to reflect directions for the next 20 years. This report builds on the work and the recommendations of the City's Strategic Plan to highlight opportunities and challenges that are available through the official planning process. The report provides direction on the future of land use in Owen Sound, and provides the groundwork for the development of new Official Plan.

Population growth and projections

Like many small cities in Ontario, Owen Sound experienced only a modest rate of population growth during 1981 to 2001. The City experienced strong growth during the 1980s at about 0.9% per year, but there was a slight reduction in the City's population during 1991 to 2001. The demographic analysis also shows that the City of Owen Sound has a very high proportion of its population in the retirement ages. Both of these effects are due to out migration by young adults and in migration by older adults.

Three different scenarios were developed for population growth in the City of Owen Sound to the year 2031. Under the "Share of Growth Scenario", the City of Owen Sound will receive about 24.5% of the growth of Grey County, or about 2600 more people by 2031. In a "Slow Growth Scenario", the population of Owen Sound would fall by 7.8% (about 1,660 people) during 2001 to 2031. Under the "Economic Revival Scenario", the population of Owen Sound would increase by 36% by 2031, to just over 29,000. It is prudent for the Official Plan to plan for the highest level of growth to ensure that the City is prepared for the future.

Land use

Owen Sound appears to have sufficient land to accommodate future growth projections. The City appears to have sufficient land for residential and commercial purposes for the next 20 years, or the expected life of the new Plan. There are likely current over-designations of industrial lands that may have locational advantages for alternative uses, such as residential or commercial.

Even with the highest population growth projections, further annexation is not recommended as a strategy to accommodate future population growth. Annexation is expensive given the servicing requirements that must be accommodated. It also has the effect of dispersing development even further as previously discussed. Owen Sound appears to have sufficient land to accommodate



future development within its own boundaries thereby making annexation unnecessary. It is, however, important for a regional body to ensure that development does not happen in a scattered and random way outside the City boundaries. It would be appropriate to consider amalgamation to deal with growth issues such as lack of servicing for existing fringe development and to maintain balance in its planning strategies.

Cultural heritage

The Cultural Heritage of Owen Sound is a key element in its effectiveness in attracting tourism, new residents and businesses. Consistent with the new directions of the Ontario Heritage Act, several directions emerge for the Official Plan. The Official Plan objectives should reflect all aspects of cultural heritage. Heritage properties should be designated as having “cultural heritage value or interest” rather than “historic or architectural value or interest”. The Official Plan should require the preparation of a Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan. The Official Plan should provide the basis for the City to create incentives to protect heritage resources and it provide support for cultural activities by encouraging the provision and retention of museums, galleries, libraries, theatres, arenas and other suitable facilities within the city.

Natural Heritage

Owen Sound has a unique natural heritage system that contributes to the high quality of life that the people of Owen Sound appreciate. Owen Sound and surrounding areas were reviewed for their natural heritage areas and linkages between them. These natural areas provide travel routes for fisheries, amphibians, snakes, mammals, plants and people. Identifying the key wildlife core areas, corridors and linkages between these areas requires a supportive environmental policy and zoning framework to ensure that Owen Sound continues to retain their unique landscape and character. The City of Owen Sound has a tremendous opportunity to design and designate a Natural Heritage System consistent with the current Provincial Policy. The City is rich in knowledgeable individuals and groups to facilitate these goals.

Economic Development

Continued economic vitality is critical to maintaining the high quality of community life enjoyed by the residents of Owen Sound. Owen Sound is a regional centre serving both Grey and Bruce Counties. This role has contributed greatly to Owen Sound’s stable commercial and industrial base. The commercial sector has been growing with the introduction of new retail formats such as ‘big box’ outlets. The City continues to take pride in and support the Downtown as its primary business district. Industrial land is available and the City continues to aggressively market the advantages of locating in Owen Sound. The City is part of a vibrant regional tourism area. The tourism sector holds great promise for local economic growth. Owen Sound can continue to play its regional centre role by offering hospitality services and becoming a destination, in its own right, with the development of new destination-quality facilities such as Escarpment Centre Ontario and the proposed conference centre and resort.



Recreation

The residents and visitors to Owen Sound participate in a variety of recreational activities year round. The Official Plan process can help to ensure that the land use requirements for recreation are appropriate for the long term. Recreational needs are constantly changing as one activity becomes more popular and another wanes. The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan not only needs to be reviewed and updated, but also needs to be adopted by Council as policy. The present Official Plan states that it should be adopted as an amendment to the Official Plan. While certain aspects of the Plan might require amendments to the Official Plan, the detail of the provision of recreation services and facilities might be better dealt with as adopted policy of Council under the direction, goals and objectives of the Official Plan. This makes the regular review and amendment of the Recreation Plan a simpler process.

Transportation

The transportation system for a city has a major effect on the vitality of the city. In the case of Owen Sound, there is a need to update current information and systems in order to be able to plan for future development. The Official Plan presents an opportunity to undertake further analysis as part of a transportation plan.

Servicing

The challenge to the City is to provide good quality basic services (water, sewer, surface water management, landfill) at a reasonable cost to the taxpayers/service users. This is a challenge because the City is facing several large infrastructure items such as the landfill, cross harbour forcemain, new bridge, harbour divestiture, rivewalk improvements, and a growing backlog of the usual infrastructure decay. While these items are important to maintaining quality of life and growing in the manner that the city desires, growth projections do not show a potential for significant new dollars from new development. As such the city will have to make choices about priorities for infrastructure development, priorities in timing and in scope. The Official Plan presents an opportunity to expand current services to areas of future development. Although a large portion of currently developed areas are well served by public services, not all potential development areas are, such as the Northeastern part of the industrial park and lands east and south of the Health Centre.

A Place in the Region

Owen Sound will need to play a key role in defining the policies required to build an understanding of its place as the centre of Grey and Bruce Counties. The City has extensive investment in infrastructure, both hard and soft, and it is important that development patterns build on this infrastructure investment. The City has adopted a set of draft policies for the County Plan that emphasize its role as a regional centre. The County can be important in discouraging development in areas outside the Regional Centre that hinder the efficient development of Owen Sound. Boundary related development issues are going to become an



increasing issue in the Municipality and the County, and it is important that the Official Plan at the County level speaks to those issues.

Key Directions for the Official Plan

The city of Owen Sound is at an important juncture in its planning process. The city is poised to benefit from growth in Southern Ontario, in a manner that is consistent with its traditional pattern of growth as a regional centre with strong local services, and as a community in which people can live, work and raise a family without the drawbacks of larger cities. To accommodate this growth, the report recommends a vision for the Official Plan that includes new development areas.

The Official Plan should focus special attention on intensifying the downtown for increased residential and commercial usage and creating linkages to the harbour areas with commercial and mix-uses. The attractiveness of this area for living is clearly related to the vistas and scenery that the harbour provides. New residential development could take on a variety of forms, taking full advantage of the waterfront potential.

The most northern part of the city, the northern parts of the East Bluffs, is designated industrial and rural though the industrial is not fully developed at this time. This report recommends that the Official Plan move towards the re-designation of this area for future residential and commercial mixed-use purposes. The area is conveniently located close to the water providing potential vistas for future residential development. As the area is not within walking distance to commercial areas, the neighbourhood should seek to incorporate smaller commercial enterprises which can serve local needs in the interior areas and more regional, city-wide tourist destination commercial spaces along the waterfront.

Special Policy Area 1 was considered as Amendment 6 to the 1984 Official Plan. The area has seen changes in its development pattern from what was originally envisaged, with some of what was originally designated residentially eventually amended to commercial. It is recommended that the Official Plan move forward with this area as a site for primarily future residential development and serve as a vehicle for the development of a capital program to upgrade hard services in the area. While the capital investment required to service this area is large, it is preferable than residential development in the large industrial area to the north or annexation of areas adjacent to the city. Each of these options would also bring large expense as well as incurring other perhaps larger political costs.

This recommended model of development and the policies proposed for consideration in the Official Plan are consistent with the recommendations that have been adopted as part of the City's Strategic Plan and in the Downtown and Harbour Master Plan. They are also consistent with the comments expressed at the Public Information Centre (PIC). As such, they build and strengthen the ideas and plans that City Council and the community have voiced. The Official Plan must be a significant tool towards the implementation of the vision.



2 INTRODUCTION

The people of Owen Sound want a place to live with the highest quality of life. They want families to stay in the community. They want the city to grow as a regional centre and a desirable destination for tourism and recreation.

Building a successful city means making choices about the future that reflect priorities. This report sets out the background information for making choices about a future land use plan for Owen Sound. The City's current land use plan is approaching the end of its lifetime; a new plan will soon be developed to reflect directions for the next 20 years. This report builds on the work and the recommendations of the City's Strategic Plan to highlight opportunities and challenges that are available through the official planning process. The report provides direction on the future of land use in Owen Sound, and provides the ground work for the development of new Official Plan.

This report is based on a review of all relevant documents and research related to the key issues affecting the health and well-being of the city. As such, it builds on existing information to identify linkages, needs and opportunities for the next stage of the Official Plan process.

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE OFFICIAL PLAN BACKGROUND STUDY

The purpose of this report is to provide the necessary background material to enable the City of Owen Sound to prepare its Official Plan. The Official Plan will provide the policies necessary to guide the land use development for the next 20 years. The Plan will provide the vision, the principles and policies to guide the form that land use planning should take and the supports necessary to implement the Plan. This report reviews the documentation relevant to an Official Plan review and highlights for Council the key issues that should be addressed in the next stage.

The last Official Plan for the City of Owen Sound was prepared in 1984. Much has changed since this plan was adopted. While amendments have been made to the plan over the years, this report is the first attempt to consolidate the changes that have occurred and examine the information in a comprehensive manner. As such, the report looks at the trends that have shaped development in the city over the past 20 years and highlights the key issues that emerge from these trends for the future. At the same time, the report reflects on the desired strategic directions that the City has already indicated it wants to take and lays out the issues that need to be addressed in the preparation of a new Official Plan.

The City has engaged in a recent strategic plan process that has articulated much of the emerging vision. It would be appropriate for the New Official Plan to embrace the relevant recommendations of the plan. Once the Official Plan is adopted by City Council, and approved by the County of Grey and the Minister of Municipal Affairs, it becomes the legally binding set



of policies and objectives that provide guidance to future investment decisions within Owen Sound.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF THIS REPORT

The background study has compiled all the relevant information available to assist the City in developing its Official Plan policies. It has also identified where further research or analysis might need to be undertaken prior to the development of the Official Plan.

The City has developed a Strategic Plan that sets out a vision and identifies priorities for the City in its broadest sense. These priorities must be reflected in the Official Plan and in the identification of opportunities for the Official Plan. The land use development process must give attention to the overall vision that Council has already adopted. For this reason, this background study reflects the strategic priorities in the Strategic Plan.

This report is divided into several sections covering the major issue areas that are relevant to the preparation of the Official Plan. For each issue area, the report comments on changes which have occurred since the previous plan, significant changes in policy direction over the past 20 years, the current policy context, significant facts, trends and likely outcomes for the next 20 years, and key issues that emerge for the new Official Plan. (See **Map 1 Owen Sound Location** to situate Owen Sound in Southern Ontario).

The first two substantive sections of the report provide some of the context for understanding the trends that have shaped and will shape the future of Owen Sound. Section 3 provides an overview of the demographic and socio-income profile of the City. It also lays out population growth projections for the next 30 years. Section 4 the regional, provincial and federal issues and initiatives that affect the context and opportunities for land use planning and development in Owen Sound. Sections 5 to 12 provide the relevant background related to land use, urban design, natural environment, economic development and tourism, recreation, transportation, and servicing. Each chapter identifies the current policy context, the key trends and issues, and the challenges and opportunities available through the land use planning process. The report concludes with an integration of the information gathered for the background study, highlighting a vision and potential directions for the Official Plan, as well as the support required to ensure the vision is achieved.



3 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS

This section provides a profile of demographic and economic characteristics of Owen Sound, using Statistics Canada Census data from 1981 to 2001. In addition to data for the City of Owen Sound, data are provided for Grey County, Bruce County and the province of Ontario, for comparative purposes.

3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

Like many small cities in Ontario, Owen Sound experienced only a modest rate of population growth during 1981 to 2001, as data in Table 1 shows the growth rate averaged just 0.38% per year. The City experienced strong growth during the 1980s at about 0.9% per year, but there was a slight reduction in the City's population during 1991 to 2001. Population growth in the City of Owen Sound has lagged behind Grey County, as some towns in the County (particularly the Blue Mountains area) have received large numbers of in-migrants. Bruce County also experienced a decline in population between 1991 and 2001.

Table 1
Population, 1981 to 2001

Census Date	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
1981	19,883	73,824	60,020	8,625,107
1986	19,804	74,759	58,848	9,101,694
1991	21,674	84,071	65,268	10,084,885
1996	21,390	87,632	68,680	10,753,573
2001	21,431	89,073	63,892	11,410,046
Average Annual Growth Rate 1981 to 2001	0.38%	0.94%	0.31%	1.41%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

Owen Sound is known as a retirement community. Census data shown in Table 2 indicate that this label is well deserved, as more than one-fifth of the City's population is aged 65 years or older. By contrast, in the entire province of Ontario, just 13% of the population is aged 65 and above.

In Owen Sound, just 54% of the population is in the working age groups (20 to 64 years), compared to almost 61% for Ontario. In Owen Sound the share of the population in the working years essentially was unchanged in 2001 compared to 1981. On the other hand, in the entire province there was a small but important increase in the share of the population (2 percentage



points) in this age bracket. As will be shown later in this report, Owen Sound has experienced an outflow of people in the young working ages (20 to 34) and an inflow in older age groups. In the province of Ontario and each of the areas covered in this review, the share of the population in the youth age group (less than 20 years) fell during 1981 to 2001, as a result of falling birth rates. Owen Sound has a below average share of its population in the youth age brackets. This is most likely the consequence of the out-migration of young adults, which means that Owen Sound has a below average share of its female population in the child bearing years.

Table 2				
Distribution of Population by Age Group, 1981 and 2001				
Age Group	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
Youth (0-19 years)				
1981	29.80%	31.30%	33.90%	31.30%
2001	25.10%	25.60%	26.30%	26.30%
Working Age (20-64 years)				
1981	54.10%	53.90%	53.20%	58.70%
2001	54.40%	56.40%	56.40%	60.80%
Retirement Age (65 years or more)				
1981	16.10%	14.80%	12.90%	10.10%
2001	20.50%	18.00%	17.40%	12.90%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

3.1.1 Households

The average number of people in each household is significantly lower in Owen Sound (an average of 2.3) than in the province of Ontario (2.7) – see Table 3. This is related to the large share of the population that is in the retirement ages and no longer has children living at home.

Table 3				
Average Number of Persons Per Household, 1981 and 2001				
Year	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
1981	2.5	2.8	2.9	2.8
2001	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.7

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

However, Owen Sound also has a large percentage of its population living as unattached individuals. Moreover, the share in Owen Sound increased sharply during 1981 to 2001 – see Table 4. This could be related mainly to growth in the number of elderly widows.



Table 4
Non-Family Persons as a Percentage of the Population, 1981 and 2001

Year	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
1981	14.40%	11.40%	10.30%	12.80%
2001	18.20%	12.40%	11.60%	13.60%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

3.1.2 Families

Table 5 illustrates the shares of families that include two adults (this includes families with and without children) versus the share for lone parent families. Owen Sound has a very high share of lone parent families, and that share increased quite substantially during 1981 to 2001.

The high and rising share of lone parent families is likely related to Owen Sound's role as a regional service centre, which means that it provides more of the services and supports that are required by lone parent families. In particular, Owen Sound has a much larger amount of rental housing compared to other communities in the region.

Table 5
Families With Two Adults Versus Lone Parent Families, 1981 and 2001

	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
<i>Number of Families</i>				
1981	5,330	20,145	15,940	2,278,975
2001	5,875	26,200	18,635	3,190,990
<i>% of Families By Type</i>				
<i>Husband-Wife</i>				
1981	87.10%	91.30%	92.90%	89.00%
2001	80.80%	88.50%	90.20%	84.80%
<i>Lone Parent Families</i>				
1981	12.90%	8.70%	7.10%	11.00%
2001	19.10%	11.50%	9.70%	15.20%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

3.2 SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

3.2.1 Incomes

Table 6 shows median incomes for all households, as well as for families and unattached individuals, for 1981 to 1996 (2001 Census data on incomes are not yet available).



Table 6				
Household Incomes, 1981 to 1996				
	<i>City of Owen Sound</i>	<i>Grey County</i>	<i>Bruce County</i>	<i>Ontario</i>
<i>Median Income of All Households</i>				
1981	\$17,417	\$16,642	\$19,127	\$22,553
1986	\$24,667	\$24,037	\$27,468	\$33,017
1991	\$31,620	\$34,749	\$37,584	\$44,432
1996	\$32,078	\$36,576	\$38,724	\$45,155
<i>Median Income of Families</i>				
1981	\$20,865	\$19,206	\$22,404	\$25,215
1986	\$31,241	\$28,410	\$31,552	\$36,978
1991	\$40,604	\$40,673	\$44,098	\$50,046
1996	\$41,882	\$43,361	\$45,685	\$51,520
<i>Median Income of Unattached Individuals</i>				
1981	\$6,579	\$6,403	\$6,575	\$8,810
1986	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1991	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1996	\$15,695	\$15,902	\$16,130	\$16,179
<i>Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.</i>				

During 1981 to 1996, the median household income in Owen Sound increased by 84%, less than the 100% increase for all of Ontario. The slower increase in Owen Sound is largely due to the shift of the City’s population into retirement age brackets. An increasing percentage of Owen Sound’s population is experiencing the reduced incomes that come with retirement. In addition, the changing composition of households in Owen Sound is a factor that is creating a downward bias for income growth: a high and rising share of Owen Sound’s population is living as unattached individuals, and a high and rising share of families are lone parents. For both of these groups, incomes are lower compared to families with two adults. As the shares of these groups have increased in Owen Sound, they have tended to bring down average and median incomes in the City.

For families, the median income in Owen Sound increased by 101% from 1981 to 1996, which is almost the same rate as for all of Ontario (104%).

For unattached individuals, the median income in Owen Sound increased by 139%, a considerably stronger rate of growth compared to the Ontario increase of 84%. The strong growth in Owen Sound may be partly due to the maturation of the Canada Pension Plan. During 1981 to 1996, there was a substantial increase in the percentage of the retired population that was receiving Canada Pension Plan benefits. Since Owen Sound has a high percentage of its population in the retirement ages, it received a greater impact compared to all of Ontario.



3.2.2 Housing Costs

Table 7 illustrates data from the 1996 Census on average values of owner-occupied homes in the various areas and average rents. (Data from the 2001 Census on housing costs are not yet available. Thus, all of the tables in this section use 1996 data.) The data indicate that housing in Owen Sound is highly affordable, with average house values and rents that are well below the provincial averages.

Table 7				
Average Home Values and Rents, 1996				
	<i>City of Owen Sound</i>	<i>Grey County</i>	<i>Bruce County</i>	<i>Ontario</i>
<i>Average Value of Owner Occupied Dwellings</i>	\$125,215	\$137,360	\$127,741	\$177,410
<i>Average Rent</i>	\$552	\$549	\$562	\$679

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

A widely used notion of housing affordability is that a household paying 30% or more of its gross income for shelter has an affordability problem. Data on shelter cost to income ratios (in Table 8) indicates that relatively few home owners in Owen Sound have affordability problems. The percentage in Owen Sound, at just 13.6%, is one-quarter lower than the Ontario ratio of 18.5%.

For tenants, however, the data indicate that in all communities a high percentage of households have affordability problems. In Owen Sound there is an above average incidence of problems, at 51%, which exceeds the Ontario rate of 44%. This is related to the composition of households in Owen Sound. Table 4 showed that a high percentage of the Owen Sound population is “non-family”, a group that tends to have low incomes, lives in rentals, and has difficulties affording to pay the rent. Similarly, Table 5 showed that a high percentage of families in Owen Sound are single parent families. Once again, this group tends to live in rentals, have low incomes, and has difficulty affording rent. With the reduction of Ontario welfare rates in the mid 1990s, it is likely that the incidence of rental affordability problems has increased further, in Owen Sound and elsewhere in Ontario.

Table 8				
Per Cent of Home Owners and Tenants				
With Affordability Problems, 1996				
	<i>City of Owen Sound</i>	<i>Grey County</i>	<i>Bruce County</i>	<i>Ontario</i>
<i>% of Owners Paying 30% or More of Income for Shelter</i>	13.60%	15.60%	13.20%	18.50%
<i>% of Tenants Paying 30% or More of Income for Shelter</i>	51.20%	48.00%	41.30%	44.10%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.



3.3 POPULATION GROWTH

In this section, two approaches – a “share of growth” approach and a “cohort survival” approach - are used to project the population of the City of Owen Sound to the year 2031.

During the past 20 years, the City of Owen Sound has experienced modest population growth. The demographic analysis section showed that the population of Owen Sound increased by just 0.4% per year during 1981 to 2001, which is substantially lower compared to the growth rate for all of Ontario (1.4%). The demographic analysis also showed that the City of Owen Sound has a very high proportion of its population in the retirement ages. Both of these effects are due to out migration by young adults and in migration by older adults.

Three different scenarios were developed for population growth in the City of Owen Sound.

- In the “Share of Growth Scenario”, it is assumed that the City of Owen Sound will receive about 24.5% of the growth of Grey County. This is based on its existing share of the County’s population. In this scenario, the projections of population growth for Grey County were developed by the Ontario Ministry of Finance.

Two scenarios were developed using a “cohort survival model”. This type of projection model:

- Takes the population in each age group and estimates how many will still be alive (and five years older) in five years.
- Adds an estimate of the number of in-migrants in each age group.
- Adds an estimate of the number of births.
- Sums these components to estimate the total population.

The two scenarios are:

- In a “Slow Growth Scenario”, migration for each age group is assumed to be at the same rate as for 1996 to 2001. During 1996 to 2001, there was a substantial out migration of people aged 20 to 34. If it is assumed that this will continue, then the result would be a substantial reduction in the population in the early and middle working ages. By 2031 the population of Owen Sound would fall by 7.8% (about 1,660 people) during 2001 to 2031.
- As an alternative, an “Economic Revival Scenario” has been developed, in which the out-migration rate for young people is gradually reduced and the in-migration rates for other age groups gradually increase. In this scenario, the population of Owen Sound would increase by 36% by 2031, to just over 29,000. This acceleration of population growth would occur as a result of improvements in the amenities and recreational opportunities available in Owen Sound, as well as by expanded opportunities for post-secondary education and more job opportunities in an expanding economic base.



Table 9
Projected Population of the City of Owen Sound

Year	"Share of Growth"		"Slow Growth"		"Economic Revival"	
	Population	% Change Per Year	Population	% Change Per Year	Population	% Change Per Year
2001	21,425		21,425		21,425	
2006	21,587	0.15%	21,399	-0.02%	21,964	0.50%
2011	21,740	0.14%	21,173	-0.21%	22,830	0.78%
2016	22,467	0.66%	20,894	-0.27%	24,139	1.12%
2021	23,076	0.54%	20,610	-0.27%	25,867	1.39%
2026	23,472	0.34%	20,245	-0.36%	27,558	1.27%
2031	24,038	0.48%	19,762	-0.48%	29,158	1.14%
Source: Will Dunning Inc.						



TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



4 REGIONAL, PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL CONTEXTS FOR LAND USE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN OWEN SOUND

As the issues discussed in this report will show, the outcomes of the land use planning process are determined by a number of factors. Some of these factors lie outside the jurisdiction of the City itself. This section reviews some of the key initiatives and legislative policies in other jurisdictions that could potentially have an impact on the development of the Official Plan and on the implementation of policies and directions that emerge in the Plan. There are of course a large number of policies which affect how land is developed in a city. This section reviews recent or emerging initiatives, in order to describe a context for the development of the Plan is different from the previous one, and in order to ensure that the City is able to take advantage or plan for emerging barriers and opportunities.

4.1 REGIONAL INITIATIVES

4.1.1 Grey County Official Plan

The City of Owen Sound is the Regional Centre serving both Grey and Bruce Counties. The City of Owen Sound has recently been amalgamated into the County of Grey. The County Official Plan was adopted in 1997 when the City of Owen Sound did not fall under its jurisdiction. As such, the Plan reflects a region that does not include the largest regional centre in the area, due to the plans preparation before the City re-joined in 2001. Recent planning applications in Grey County for residential and commercial expansion outside Owen Sound suggest that there is a lack of County policies with respect to the role that Owen Sound plays as a regional centre.

The City/County Restructuring Agreement, adopted in 2000, requires the City to be included in the County Official Plan in 2003. The County has indicated that it will consider this amendment as part of the five year review of their Official Plan which is scheduled to begin later this year. It will be important for the new Owen Sound Official Plan to be clear about the role it plays in the County and develops a policy framework for inclusion in the County Official Plan.

The County is the approval authority for the new Official Plan. While the County has indicated that it's role in the development of the Owen Sound Official Plan will be limited to "acting as a resource and ensuring general compliance with provincial policy", it will be important that the County Plan review recognize the unique role of Owen Sound in the County.

City Council has approved a draft set of policies for a new Regional Centre designation that could be incorporated into the five year review or at an earlier stage as required. These policies would set the stage for the development of supporting policies in the new Official Plan.



4.2 PROVINCIAL INITIATIVES

4.2.1 Provincial Policy Statement review

The Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) is issued under the authority of Section 3 of the *Planning Act*. It provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest related to land use planning and development. The policies focus on the key provincial interests related to land use patterns, resources, public health and safety. Section 3 of the Planning Act requires that, in exercising any authority that affects planning matters, planning authorities "shall have regard to" policy statements issued under the Act.

The PPS has been reviewed since the current Owen Sound OP was adopted. The current PPS came into effect in 1997 and continues to have relevance until a new set of policies is adopted. The following summarizes policies that may have the most relevance to the new Official Plan. In addition, where appropriate, each section of this report highlights the policies in the PPS that are most relevant to the topic under discussion.

Strong Communities

- Focusing development in existing urban areas and rural settlement areas.
- Coordinating ecosystem planning and infrastructure planning across municipal boundaries.
- Ensuring that there is adequate land available to meet residential and employment projections.

Housing

- Maintaining at all times at least a 10 year supply of land available for new residential development.
- Planning for the full range of housing types.

Infrastructure

- Full municipal sewage and water services are the preferred form of servicing for urban areas and rural settlement areas.

Transportation

- Transportation systems should be safe, environmentally sensitive and energy efficient.
- Corridors and rights of way for significant future transportation should be protected.
- Land requirements and land use patterns will be based on densities which support the use of public transit, in areas where it exists or is to be developed.

Agriculture

- Protecting prime agricultural lands and discouraging lot creation on prime agricultural land.



Natural Heritage

- Protecting natural heritage features from incompatible development.
- Maintaining and improving where possible the natural features of an area and the natural connections between them.

Water Quality and Quantity

- Protecting or enhancing the quality and quantity of ground water and surface water.

Cultural Heritage and Archaeological Resources

- Conserving significant built heritage resources and cultural heritage landscapes.
- Permitting development and site alterations if significant archaeological resources have been conserved or removed.

Natural Hazards

- Directing development to areas outside hazardous lands adjacent to large inland lakes, rivers and stream systems that are impacted by flooding or erosion.
- Not permitting development within a floodway.

The Government of Ontario is undertaking a review of the PPS at this time. The government has consulted widely with communities across the province and other stakeholders to ensure that “the province’s land use planning policies are effectively protecting Ontario’s interests and to determine whether any changes need to be made to the policies.” In the development of the new Official Plan it will be important to remain cognizant of the policies emerging through the new PPS.

4.2.2 Smart Growth

Smart Growth is a term that has been used for many years in the United States to encompass a set of policies and directions to reduce urban sprawl. In Ontario, the provincial Smart Growth Secretariat was established in the fall of 2000 to develop smart growth strategies for the province. With the establishment of the secretariat and the appointment of an Assistant Deputy Minister, the Provincial Government has set out to develop a “Made-In-Ontario Smart Growth Strategy” which would take in to account the needs of all the regions in the province, not only those affected by urban sprawl. The Smart Growth goals for the province adopted early on by the government include:

- Improve Competitiveness and Increase Opportunity
- Make Better Decisions About Infrastructure
- Create Transportation Choices
- Build Liveable Communities

To develop policies that are unique to the needs of the different regions of the province, the Government has set up 5 panels made up of stakeholders and local politicians. The panel’s role is to assess the unique needs of the region and recommend a strategy to the Government. The city



of Owen Sound falls within the realm of the Western Panel, chaired by Diane Gagner, Mayor of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. The Western Panels boundary is boot-shaped, stretching north to Grey and Bruce Counties, west to the border and east to include Perth, Oxford and Norfolk Counties. No member of Owen Sound City Council sits on the Panel, however, the CAO of Grey County is a member.

To date the Panel has said that its priority is to promote balanced growth in ways that benefit urban, rural and agriculture communities across the zone. So far, the panel's early discussions have included the following key areas:

- **Plan strategically:** *Well-managed growth means ensuring that needed services and infrastructure are in place in communities targeted for growth.*
- **Branch out:** *Western Ontario's challenge is to preserve agricultural lands, and promote a competitive, innovative agri-food sector, while seeking balanced growth.*
- **Safeguard the environment:** *It is crucial to protect the agricultural lands and natural features that are vital to the environmental and economic health of western Ontario.*
- **Foster talent:** *A well-trained work force attracts diversified growth and investment, which in turn create better jobs and economic opportunities for everyone, especially youth.*

The Western Panel will deliver its report with recommendations to the Minister in the summer of 2003. It is not yet clear how the government would implement the strategies recommended by the Panel. Presumably the recommendations will touch on areas that do not fall within the ministry's jurisdiction. The Central Zone Panel that includes the GTA and borders Grey County has delivered an implementation plan. This may be the first test case for the government.

In general terms, however, the thrust of the smart growth strategy for the Western Region appears to support the thrust of economic development and planning that is conveyed through the Owen Sound Strategic Plan. The initiative appears to support the notion of making best use of regional centres and existing infrastructure, including existing brownfield areas and promoting the re-development of downtown areas in smaller communities. The Smart Growth initiative also supports the city's interest in managing waste in an environmentally sound manner and managing the regions environmental resources so as not to jeopardize options for future generations.

4.2.3 Brownfield Legislation

The Brownfields Statute Law Amendment Act, 2001 is intended to encourage the remediation and redevelopment of Brownfield properties. The Act is intended to assist developers and municipalities with the some of the impediments to Brownfield rehabilitation such as the high cost of clean-up and the liability issues. The highlights of the Act are included in Appendix 1. Most of the regulations pertaining to the legislations have now been passed, the remaining expected by the end of 2003.



4.2.4 Ontarians with Disabilities Act

Within the Province of Ontario there are 1.9 million people with disabilities and the number is expected to rise as the population ages.¹ Ensuring that persons with disabilities have efficient access to all uses and services a government, agency, business or organization provides is a fundamental right, which is supported within the following Provincial Acts,

- *The Assessment Act*
- *The Blind Persons' Rights Act*
- *The Building Code Act, 1992*
- *The Corporations Tax Act*
- *The Income Tax Act*
- *The Education Act*
- *The Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997*
- *The Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*

Over the last three years, the Provincial Government has given more attention to the issue of accessibility for persons with disabilities, as a result the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001* was passed with the purpose to encourage improvement to access and to provide equal opportunity for persons with disabilities². Such an Act will provide various guidelines and tools, which can be utilized within the new City of Owen Sound Official Plan. The Act outlines various duties for agencies, organizations and municipalities.

In regards to municipalities, the following duties are prescribed in Section 11 of the Act³, Each year, the Council of every municipality will:

- a. Prepare an accessibility plan; and
- b. Either:
 - ii. Get advice from its accessibility advisory committee; or
 - iii. Consult with people with disabilities and others if the council doesn't have an accessibility advisory committee.

Promoting tools like the Accessibility Plan and the Committee within the new Official Plan can assist in creating a broad comprehensive Accessibility Plan for the City, while ensuring that the objectives of the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act* remain fulfilled. Although the Act requires each municipality with a population of 10,000 persons or more to create an Accessibility Plan, the Act does not require municipalities to include such policy in Official Plans⁴. Therefore, the Official Plan can encompass accessibility policy, which focuses solely on Owen Sound and is

¹Queen's Printer for Ontario. (www.gov.on.ca) *Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2001*, Guide to the Act. June 2003

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Ibid



not affected by Provincial guidelines. This would allow the Official Plan to provide much more comprehensive guidelines for achieving accessibility than the Act provides.

Mandatory Duties of Governments

Within the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001*, responsibilities for both provincial and municipal governments in regards to providing a wide ranging accessibility design and policy within governmental buildings and structures are clearly prescribed. The following responsibilities are currently implemented and being adhered to by both provincial and municipal governments⁵,

- Development of ‘Barrier-Free’ design within all buildings which the government buys, leases, builds or significantly renovates.
- Ensuring that the ‘level of accessibility’ meets or exceeds the requirements found within the *Building Code Act, 1992*.
- Governments will ensure that buildings where their employees work in meet accessibility requirements.
- Prior to the signing of a new lease for a building or structure the government will review the building or structure layout to ensure that accessibility requirements are being met.
- When asked the government will provide documents in an accessible form unless not technically possible to do so.
- The government will train their employees to ensure that they are aware of accessibility policy and guidelines.
- A government may provide Capital Programs to renovate or remodel an old or new building to meet accessibility guidelines.
- Provincial and Municipal governments will provide ‘Accessibility Plans’ to ensure that access to persons with disabilities is equal and widely distributed.

Accessibility Plans

Each year a municipality will provide Council with an Accessibility Plan, which must include⁶:

- A report on the steps the municipality has taken to identify, remove and prevent barriers to people with disabilities.
- How the municipality assesses its proposals for by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services.
- A list of by-laws, policies, programs, practices and services the municipality will review in the coming year to identify barriers.
- How the municipality intends to identify, remove and prevent barriers in the coming year.
- All other information required by the regulations.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid



The plans are generally prepared under the supervision of Council and Accessibility Advisory Committees, which are mandatory for municipalities with a population of 10,000 or more. Such a committee will generally give advice to Council and the Public on how to prepare an *Accessibility Plan* and how to achieve the goals of the plan. The committee will also review Site Plans to ensure that the goals of the *Accessibility Plan* are being fulfilled.

City of Owen Sound Accessibility Plan

The City of Owen Sound currently has recently established an Accessibility Advisory Committee and staff have prepared a *Draft Accessibility Plan*⁷. The objectives of this plan include:

- The need to create policies and Standards for City facilities.
- The need to develop a reasonable capital program for accessibility improvements.
- The need to develop an extensive 'Facility Inventory' within the City.

The current inventory referred to in the plan focuses mainly on government buildings in Owen Sound, rather than on a comprehensive list of both private and publicly owned buildings. The current *Draft Accessibility Plan* is based on the requirement prescribed in the *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, which does not require a full comprehensive Accessibility Plan for the entire City of Owen Sound.

The *Draft Accessibility Plan* recognizes the various tools needed to implement measures that will encourage the promotion of accessibility within buildings and structures. Such tools include the Strategic Plan, Official Plan, Building Code, Site Plan Control and Zoning. These tools establish the parameters and criteria for implementing more accessible places within Owen Sound. Currently, Site Plan Control and the *Ontario Building Code* provide the specific requirements for the implementation of accessibility design. However, there are various exceptions, such as not having to upgrade accessibility unless work is being conducted on the entrance of the existing building, which do not actively encourage accessibility design in existing buildings throughout the City⁸.

Opportunities and Challenges for the Official Plan Regarding Accessibility

The preparation of a comprehensive accessibility plan can be encouraged through the new Official Plan, to include the need for accessible design for all buildings, with minimal exception. Establishing broad policy to promote the benefits of accessibility design would be the first step in achieving this objective. As such, the Official Plan should focus on the public awareness of accessibility design with emphasis on the economic benefits for private proprietors of buildings requiring accessibility upgrades and the development of a fully comprehensive accessibility plan that includes all private and public buildings utilized by the general public.

⁷ City of Owen Sound. Third Draft Accessibility Plan. June 2003.

⁸ Ibid, Pp 9.



The City currently has a sound awareness of accessibility design in public spaces with examples such as City Hall, Art Gallery, Library and the Works Building. Accessibility policy would encourage private property owners and facilitate the renovations of existing buildings that require accessibility upgrades. Ensuring that both public and private spaces are held to accessibility standards is a challenge, which will require a collaborative approach, especially in regards to the financial support needed to upgrade older buildings.

Other supports required to ensure that a fully comprehensive accessibility policy is implemented include:

- Strengthening the *Building Code* and Site Plan Control to encourage accessibility upgrades for buildings or structures undergoing renovations, with minimal exceptions allowed.
- Updating the current Facility Inventory to include private business, schools and all other buildings or structures, which are utilized by the general public.
- The development of Capital Programs, which provide grants and other incentives to private businesses for upgrading their building's accessibility.
- An educational program, which attempts to create and promote a general understanding of the social and economic benefits for creating a fully accessible community.
- Work closely with surrounding municipalities and other government agencies to promote the need for better accessibility.
- Utilize urban design guidelines to promote accessibility within Owen Sound.

4.3 FEDERAL INITIATIVES

4.3.1 Infrastructure Canada Program

The program was confirmed in the Federal Budget 2000, when \$2.65 billion in funding for the program over six years was announced. The program has two components: municipal infrastructure, called Infrastructure Canada, and a highways component, administered by Transport Canada called Strategic Highway Infrastructure Program (SHIP). Up to \$600 million of the \$2.65 billion total may be spent on the highways component.

The program is cost-shared, with the Government of Canada contributing, on average, one-third of the cost of municipal infrastructure projects. Phases 1 and 2 of the Canada Infrastructure Works Program were earlier infrastructure programs using a similar model, but with different criteria.⁹

The recent report of the Prime Ministers Task Force on Urban Issues has recommended that a 10 year or longer infrastructure program be put in place to assist urban areas with capital intensive projects.

⁹ Source: Infrastructure Canada Web site



4.3.2 National Brownfield Strategy

The National Roundtable on the Environment and the Economy (NRTEE) has recently released a National Brownfield Redevelopment Strategy for Canada. The strategy proposes a blueprint for action in three critical areas¹⁰:

1. Applying strategic public investments to address upfront costs.
2. Establishing an effective public policy regime for environmental liability and risk management.
3. Building capacity for and community awareness of brownfield redevelopment.

A summary of the key recommendations of the strategy are presented in Appendix B.

This strategy presents a set of recommendations directed mostly at the federal and provincial governments. It represents opportunities to facilitate and legislate action to re-develop brownfield areas. Many of the strategies proposed should be implemented and could assist the City of Owen in the re-development of its brownfield areas.

¹⁰ Source: NRTEE Web site



TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



5 LAND USE

5.1 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

The 1984 Official Plan for the City of Owen Sound is reaching the end of its planned life. The Official Plan has been amended 21 times since its adoption by City Council in 1984. Some of the amendments are site specific, and cover changes that would have been impossible to anticipate in advance of the specific applications. Three secondary plans have been completed as Official Plan Amendments (East Bluffs, East Bluff Extension and West Harbour Planning Area). The annexed Township of Sydenham is included as an Official Plan Amendment. New policy statements that cover housing initiatives from the Province and the Municipality have been added including policies to guide new residential subdivisions. Environmental policies respecting the redevelopment of Brownfield sites have been added, and a number of site boundary adjustments have been made.

The following maps show land use designations including amendments to the Official Plan since 1984. See **Map 2 Land Use Designations**, and **Map 3 Significant Development** since 1984, to identify major developments since 1984. Examination of these maps shows that the current Official Plan provides sufficient designated lands to accommodate residential, commercial and industrial development for the next 15 to 20 years, or the expected life of any new Official Plan.

The City has done a number of relevant studies which speak to land use and guide investment and development, such as “The Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Urban Design /Master Plan Strategy” and “Commercial Needs Study”. In addition, Council adopted the Strategic Plan in August 2002 that sets out a number of initiatives for the future growth and well-being of the City. In that document, with respect to Planning and Land Use, it is recognized that the City should give a high priority to the implementation of plans and policies aimed at enhancing and revitalizing the City’s downtown core and waterfront. The new Official Plan lends itself as the appropriate vehicle to implement the recommendations of the Strategic Plan in regards to land use matters. As discussed previously, the Strategic Plan states also that the City should clearly define its role as the Regional Centre for Grey and Bruce County.

5.2 TRENDS AND ISSUES

5.2.1 Residential Housing Development and Housing Needs Forecast

Housing Stock

In the City of Owen Sound, more than 40% of the housing stock is rented, which is a very high share for a small city. Owen Sound has almost one-half of the entire rental stock of Grey County (about 3,800 rental units out of 8,045 rental units in the County). Owen Sound is also rare in that



the rental share increased during 1981 to 2001 – in most areas of the province the rental share has fallen.

Despite the increase in rental share there is still a proportion of residents spending more than 30% of their income on rental housing.

Table 10				
Housing Tenure, 1981 and 2001				
	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
% Owner-Occupied				
1981	60.10%	76.80%	78.60%	63.30%
2001	58.60%	77.20%	80.70%	67.80%
% Tenant Occupied				
1981	39.90%	23.20%	21.40%	36.70%
2001	41.40%	22.80%	19.30%	32.20%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

The housing stock in Owen Sound is distinctly different compared to the surrounding regions of Grey County and Bruce County. Owen Sound has relatively fewer single detached houses. It has a substantial share of its housing in low rise apartments. Owen Sound also has an above average share of its housing stock in the form of “apartment in a detached duplex”. These units are often in structures that were originally single-detached homes but have been converted to multi-unit use, such as a rental unit in the basement with an owner-occupied unit or rental unit on the above ground floors.

Table 11				
Housing Stock by Structural Type, 2001				
Dwelling Types	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
Single-detached house	53%	78%	86%	58%
Semi-detached house	5%	2%	2%	6%
Row house	6%	2%	2%	7%
Apartment in a detached duplex	3%	2%	1%	2%
Apartment building 5 or more storeys	7%	2%	0%	16%
Apartment building, fewer than 5 storeys	26%	12%	8%	10%
Other single-attached house	0%	0%	0%	0%
Movable dwelling	0%	1%	1%	0%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

Data on ages of dwellings indicates that in Owen Sound, as well as in Grey County and Bruce County, the housing stocks are relatively old compared to Ontario, with over 30% of dwellings constructed before 1946. In Owen Sound, there were units added made to the housing stock during 1991 to 2001.



The Census data suggest that just 6% of the Owen Sound housing stock was built during that period, compared to 11% in Grey County, 10% in Bruce County, and 14% in Ontario. The low rate of new housing additions in Owen Sound can be related to the population decline during that period. It should be noted that the periods of construction are estimated by the occupants, and the data could be inaccurate.

Table 12
Housing Stock by Period of Construction, 2001

Period of Construction	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
Before 1946	38%	34%	34%	17%
1946-1960	14%	11%	7%	16%
1961-1970	11%	10%	11%	16%
1971-1980	17%	18%	24%	19%
1981-1990	14%	17%	14%	18%
1991-1995	4%	7%	7%	7%
1996-2001	2%	4%	3%	8%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

Data on needs for repair indicates that the housing stock is in good condition. It should be noted that this Table is taken from the 1996 Census, as 2001 Census data on repair needs have not yet been released.

Table 13
Dwellings Units in Needs of Repair, 1996

	City of Owen Sound	Grey County	Bruce County	Ontario
% Needing Major Repair	7.50%	9.40%	8.50%	8.00%
% Needing Minor Repair	23.30%	27.00%	27.80%	25.90%

Source: Statistics Canada, compiled by Will Dunning Inc.

Housing Needs Forecast

Owen Sound, like many smaller Cities and Towns in Ontario, has experienced modest growth over the past twenty years. For each of the population projections provided in the previous chapter, estimates of housing requirements have been developed.

The method includes:

- For each age group, apply household formation rates to the estimated population, to estimate the number of households.
- Apply housing type choice rates to the projected number of households, to estimate the number of units that might be required each year.



The projections of housing demand that are shown below indicate the amount of growth in the housing stock that would be required to house the expected population. This does not necessarily mean that there is a demand for a corresponding number of housing starts:

- Some of the demand can be satisfied by conversions, such as the creation of basement apartments, or the conversion of non-residential buildings, such as schools and warehouses, to residential use. Conversions would reduce the need for construction of new homes.
- On the other hand, if any residential units are lost, due to demolitions or conversions out of residential use, then there is a replacement requirement, which is additional to the numbers shown below.

Share of Growth Model

The Share of Growth population estimate would result in the formation of 66 households per year during 2001 to 2031. The distribution of this requirement by housing type would be very similar to that seen in the Low End scenario: more than 60% of the requirement would be for single detached homes; the remainder would be for more affordable options.

Table 14
Potential Housing Requirements in Owen Sound Using the “Share of Growth” Projection
Units Required Per Year

Period	Single	Apartment Building (5 + storeys)	Movable Dwelling	Other Dwelling	Total/yr
	<i>Detached</i>				
2001-2006	12	2	0	9	23
2006-2011	30	3	1	15	48
2011-2016	74	5	1	30	110
2016-2021	74	5	1	30	109
2021-2026	25	3	1	15	43
2026-2031	37	4	1	20	62
<i>Average</i>	42.1	3.5	0.7	19.7	65.9
2001-2031					
<i>Share</i>	64%	5%	1%	30%	100%
<i>Owned (Units)</i>	39.1	0.7	0.6	3.9	44.4
<i>Rented (Units)</i>	3.0	2.8	0.1	15.8	21.6

Source: Will Dunning Inc.

Cohort Survival Model – Slow Growth Scenario

In the Slow Growth Scenario, the projection indicated that the population of Owen Sound could fall during 2001 to 2031. Despite this, the projections of household formation suggest that there could be a positive rate of housing demand. This occurs because the population decline occurs in the younger age groups, which have low rates of household formation. Meanwhile, the older



age groups, which have high rates of household formation, have considerable amounts of population growth. The result is that there is a reduction in the number households of younger adults but a more rapid rise in the number of households of older people.

On average, about 12 households are expected to be formed each year during 2001 to 2031. The growth rate is quite strong during the first 15 to 20 years, but then falls sharply. The largest housing requirement is for “other dwellings” - this is primarily low-rise apartments, to accommodate older people who are having difficulty remaining in their family homes. For 2021 to 2031 the projections show a negative need for single detached homes as older people move out of their family homes during the 2020s, they may find it difficult to find buyers.

Table 15
Potential Housing Requirements in Owen Sound Using the “Slow Growth” Population Projection
Units Required Per Year

Period	Single Detached	Apartment Building (5 + storeys)	Movable Dwelling	Other Dwelling	Total
2001-2006	21.0	2.0	0.0	9.0	33.0
2006-2011	18.0	2.0	0.0	7.0	27.0
2011-2016	15.0	2.0	0.0	6.0	24.0
2016-2021	10.0	2.0	0.0	6.0	18.0
2021-2026	-10.0	2.0	0.0	4.0	-4.0
2026-2031	-23.0	0.0	0.0	-2.0	-25.0
Average	5.0	1.7	0.3	5.0	12.0
2001-2031					
Share	41%	14%	3%	42%	100%
Owned (Units)	4.6	0.3	0.3	1	6.3
Rented (Units)	0.4	1.3	0	4	5.7
Source: Will Dunning Inc.					

Cohort Survival Model – Economic Revival Scenario

This alternative scenario assumes that out-migration of young adults will be much reduced and migration by older adults will expand. In this scenario, the rate of population growth expands until the middle of the next decade, and then exceeds 300 per year until 2031.

In this scenario, projected household growth is more than double the level expected in the “share of growth” scenario, and averages 140 households per year. Housing demand increases gradually during this decade and then is very substantial during the 2010s and 2020s. The requirement for single detached homes accounts for more than 60% of the total requirements, due to strong demand from young families. Demand for other dwellings is also strong, and includes a mix of “affordable” home ownership options (semi detached and town homes for young families with



modest incomes) and low rise apartments (for low income young people as well as senior citizens).

Table 16
Potential Housing Requirements in Owen Sound Using the “Economic Revival” Population Projection
Units Required Per Year

Period	Single Detached	Apartment Building (5 or more storeys)	Movable Dwelling	Other Dwelling	Total
2001-2006	46.3	4.0	0.8	19.9	71.0
2006-2011	71.9	5.5	1.1	30.9	109.4
2011-2016	99.0	7.6	1.5	43.6	151.8
2016-2021	120.4	9.7	1.9	55.4	187.4
2021-2026	101.0	10.1	2.0	56.1	169.2
2026-2031	88.6	9.2	1.9	50.9	150.6
Average	87.9	7.7	1.5	42.8	139.9
2001-2031					
Share	63%	6%	1%	31%	100%
Owned (Units)	81.6	1.6	1.4	8.6	93.2
Rented (Units)	6.2	6.1	0.1	34.2	46.7

Source: Will Dunning Inc.

Correlation and Conclusions

In this report, three scenarios of population growth have been developed and each is used in developing a projection of potential housing demand for the 2001 to 2031 period. One of the scenarios suggests that the requirement for new dwellings in Owen Sound could be quite modest, in the range of 12 units per year. The two other scenarios suggest that housing requirements could be much stronger, in the range of 65 to 140 units per year.

Table 17
Summary of Projections Potential Housing Requirements in Owen Sound
Units Required Per Year During 2001 to 2031

Scenario	Single Detached	Apartment Building (5 or more storeys)	Movable Dwelling	Other Dwelling	Total
“Share of Growth”	42.1	3.5	0.7	19.7	65.9
“Slow Growth”	5.0	1.7	0.3	5.0	12.0
“Economic Revival”	87.9	7.7	1.5	42.8	139.9

Source: Will Dunning Inc.

The “Slow Growth” scenario is the least likely to occur. It results from the mechanical projection of what was an unusual period in the history of Owen Sound.



The more optimistic scenarios (“Share of Growth” and “Economic Revival” rely to varying degrees on Owen Sound’s role as the Regional Service Centre. They also rely - again - to varying degrees, on Owen Sound attracting a rising share of older people who are retiring to small communities in Ontario.

The most optimistic scenario depends furthermore on the development of more educational opportunities and job opportunities, to allow the young adults of Owen Sound to remain in their community.

The projections show an allocation of the required housing to ownership and rental tenure. The allocations are based on shares that existed in 2001. Across Ontario, there has been a pronounced shift away from rental tenure and towards home ownership, due to low interest rates and the improved affordability of home ownership. This shift is likely to continue for some time. Thus, the actual requirement for rentals in Owen Sound is likely to be lower than is indicated in this report.

Based on current development patterns, future housing demands can be accommodated within the existing residential Official Plan designations. However, unique opportunities exist in the others areas currently designated for other uses. These opportunities will be discussed in greater detail in the final part of this section.

5.2.2 Commercial and Industrial development

Industrial Lands

Early industrial development was located along the City’s waterfront. In the late 1960s, the City established a serviced industrial park in the north-east quadrant. The industrial park contains 595 hectares of which 170 hectares has been developed. Of the 370 hectares still available for development, 30 hectares has full servicing and 340 hectares partial servicing. The land is designated ‘Industrial’ or ‘Rural’. The industrial designation allows a wide range of industrial and related uses.

The City has seen limited industrial growth over the past 20 years. Current operations have been in the community for many years and are considered stable, long-term employers. It is expected that the City’s future industrial growth will tend to be small to mid-sized operations. The City of Owen Sound has a sufficient supply of land designated for industrial purposes for the next 20 years.

Of concern is the form and function of these existing lands. Will they accommodate future demand? Should the mix and range of uses be allowed on industrial lands and the form of development be reconsidered?

In many communities, industrial parks are giving way to business parks that allow for and promote a broader range of business uses. The challenge for municipalities is to determine



whether this land use designation is appropriate and if so, where, with what mix of allowed uses and with what services and amenities to support the allowed mix. Unwanted competition between business parks and downtown areas is another challenge to be addressed. Compared to industrial parks, business parks have differing needs including:

- smaller lot sizes/greater mix for range of uses;
- less truck and more car traffic;
- more parking;
- greater attention to landscaping and design; and
- greater demand for support services such as eating establishments.

Employment Areas take this concept one step further, with an Official Plan designation that sets a broader and more flexible definition of the uses allowed within the Area. They may include: retailing, manufacturing, highway commercial, institutional and tourist/recreational uses. There would be a need to increase public amenities such as sidewalks and transit if this occurs.

As noted in the *Owen Sound Harbour & Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy*, redevelopment of the older industrial lands in the harbour area offers a significant opportunity for new development – residential, office commercial, tourism-related.

Commercial Uses

The recently completed *Commercial Needs Study* provides a thorough examination of commercial lands in the City and projections of future needs for a 20 year period (to 2021). The City has accepted this report and wishes to reflect the recommendations of the study, as they relate to land use requirements, in the new Official Plan.

The *Commercial Needs Study* reinforces the role of Owen Sound as the regional commercial centre and recommends that the City continue to seek resolution of issues associated with commercial development occurring outside municipal boundaries.

The study determined that there is sufficient existing commercial space to accommodate future demand to 2021 but that certain adjustments to the range, mix and location of retail and service/office space would be appropriate.

The study concluded that the City's Official Plan policies for the four commercial nodes, including the Downtown, continue to offer a progressive approach to commercial land use planning.

5.2.3 Urban Growth Management

In light of the background data discussed elsewhere in this report regarding residential, commercial, industrial and institutional land consumption, it appears that the City of Owen Sound has sufficient land to accommodate future growth projections in any one of these sectors.



The City appears to have sufficient land for residential and commercial purposes for the next 20 years, or the expected life of the new Plan. The assumption is that the land use planning should reflect the upper range of the population projections, in order to best prepare for future growth. There is more than enough land zoned for industrial purposes, with little evidence that it would be fully taken-up in the near future.

One of the challenges for the City of Owen Sound is to review the lands zoned for industrial purposes, especially at the north-east part of the City, and determine what tools are useful or appropriate to bring about change in this area. Although population growth is quite modest, and the population is aging, one of the region's characteristics is that it attracts new residents who are seeking recreational property in the first instance. It is only after they get established in a recreational property does the possibility of moving into the areas where the City wants new population growth become likely. New development is taking place outside the City limits, and to some extent it is pulling growth that could be attracted to Owen Sound. Without changing this pattern, it remains difficult to predict growth patterns with any certainty. Clearly, the qualitative aspects of the Downtown become an attraction, and that becomes the necessary component of an aggressive economic development.

In order to guide such future growth, proposed land use policies and land use patterns should address the issues discussed below.

Official Plan policies should be designed to discourage urban sprawl which typically takes the form of development pressures on unserviced lands or locations outside City boundaries. Both City and County policies should be developed which respond to these pressures not by discouraging development outright, but rather by re-directing such development proposals to the appropriate, available designations inside municipal service boundaries.

Incentives policies could take the form of bonusing certain types of development in certain locations by way of granting additional densities or relief from certain development costs, such as tax increment financing, municipal servicing fees, development levies and charges.

Such policy directions may be expected to have desirable effects such as:

- Utilizing existing municipal services including water, sewer and transportation infrastructure;
- Facilitating a balanced land use mix within municipal boundaries and protecting the integrity of the rural country side; and
- Working toward a balanced modal transportation split by, for instance, strengthening public transportation demands within City limits.

In the name of maintaining a healthy, balanced growth pattern within the City's limits, land use intensification should be encouraged which may take the form of developing policies to provide incentives for developing currently vacant site, developing at increased densities and directing



new development to locations where redevelopment is desirable, for example, former industrial sites, abandoned sites, under-utilized or dis-used sites, all within City limits.

Such policy would result in filling unsightly gaps in the existing urban fabric, strengthening it while, at the same time, maximizing the use of the existing urban infrastructure.

Closely related to the notion of encouraging intensification is the idea of centralization. Centralization speaks to the function of Owen Sound as the Regional Centre for commercial, industrial, institutional services and as a density hub for residential uses. Regional as well as Municipal policies should be in keeping with that ‘Central’ role for Owen Sound, which should include policies in support of and focusing on a healthy Central Business District for the City and locating major institutions within the municipality’s boundaries.

Background studies have shown that Owen Sound has been successful in maintaining a balanced, albeit somewhat slower than anticipated urban growth patterns exemplified most notably by the City’s vibrant Central Business District.

However, there are current over-designations of industrial lands that may have locational advantages for alternative uses, such as residential, commercial or re-defined industrial. There may be an opportunity in these incidences to allow and encourage such alternative uses by introducing incentives policies including public/private partnership in environmental clean-ups or the provision of publicly accessible amenities.

Particular attention may be directed toward maximizing water frontage use for residential and public recreational purposes. Direct financial public assistance or bonusing in terms of development densities may be tools employed toward that end.

5.2.4 Educational Facilities

The City of Owen Sound is enshrined with great cultural heritage, industry and institutional presence. The institutions present in Owen Sound are educational based and offer various opportunities for post secondary education with a Georgian College Campus located in the City.

Owen Sound is well served with a range of schools, and each neighbourhood appears to be well served. **Map 7 Parks, Open Space and Neighbourhoods**, in Section 10 shows the location of schools in the city of Owen Sound.

As the population of Owen Sound has aged, some school facilities are facing questions regarding their status. The sustainability of programs has become more of a challenge than the creation of new facilities. The new Official Plan will have to consider an appropriate designation for school facilities which close, such that they can be put to alternate use if required, but re-instated as schools as the population grows. This may require the establishment of a dual designation for certain areas that would allow them to be converted and re-converted over time.



Georgian College

Georgian College offers full time, part time and apprenticeship programs to students across the province of Ontario. In Owen Sound, Georgian College has located one of their ‘Main Campuses’; the other main campuses are located in the City of Barrie and Orillia. Being a ‘Main Campuses’ for Georgian College, offer various growth opportunities to the City of Owen Sound, in terms of rejuvenating the population and expanding the City’s role as a regional centre. Currently, representatives at the City of Owen Sound Georgian College campus have estimated the following growth numbers for students in various programs¹¹:

Table 18		
Georgian College: Estimated Growth		
Programs	2003	2006
Full Time	380	1000
Part Time	4200	6000
Apprenticeship	260	500
Total Students	4840	7500

The estimated increase in student enrolment of 2660 students indicates that the Owen Sound Campus is growing and becoming an important post secondary education choice within the region. In coming years the Marine Training Program is also expected to grow; currently the program trains over 800 students annually and 1200 students are expected to join the program by 2006.¹² Other corporate/contract training programs offer the Owen Sound Campus a key Continuing Education role for the surrounding region; programs include the Nuclear Operator Training at Bruce Power, Essential Skill in the Workplace at Hobart Canada and Trans Continental Printing. Given recent growth forecasts, the Georgian College Owen Sound Campus has been designated a “Growth Campus”. Currently the campus space is being re-engineered to allow for the growth and expansion of programs and services.¹³ Construction of new facilities may be undertaken to house new simulators for the Marine Training Program and other construction may take place in the near future in order to better maximize the program hours. Georgian College will continue to be a strong institutional presence in Owen Sound and it is expected to grow. Positioned with the regional center, Georgian College will continue to attract users from throughout the region and province. The City’s new Official Plan should reflect the institutional history and presence of Georgian College within Owen Sound by providing a descriptive history of Georgian College and a land use guidance plan for possible future campus expansions. Such a plan should focus on areas where Georgian College can expand in close proximity to its current campus boundaries. The Official Plan can also utilize institutional uses

¹¹ Traynor, Mike. Georgian College June 2003.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid.



such as Georgian College to develop a theme for the City of Owen Sound as a regional centre providing educational services for full time, part time and apprenticeship students. The cost of servicing institutional uses, particularly those not contributing to the tax rate, must be balanced with the overall importance of the institution to the City's regional centre goals and the spin-offs generated from these employers.

5.2.5 Development Charges

Managing costs associated with new development is a main concern for many municipalities across the Province of Ontario. In order to assist in managing and providing for the costs anticipated from new development, Development Charges have been instituted in many places. Development Charges are municipal fees that are agreed to be paid by developers of new development in order to assist in financing the growth-related capital costs associated with new and existing service requirements of development. Development charges are intended to ensure that new growth is paying for itself. As such, councils continue to debate the appropriate level and mechanisms required to ensure that their vision for development can be achieved in their community.

The *Development Charges Act*, Bill 98 received 3rd Reading and Royal Assent on December 8th, 1997 and was proclaimed into law on March 1st, 1998. The Act provides the basis and policy foundation for the justification and administration of development charges at the local level. The Act requires that municipalities identify the expected amount of growth and areas where growth is expected to occur.

The Development Charges are traditionally administered through the municipal bylaw system. In the case of the City of Owen Sound, *Bylaw 1999-147* encompasses the various development charges rates for various residential units and other uses. As part of the Act, an appeal process is set for persons or entities that do not agree with the development charge amount or do not agree with the actual development charge. This appeal process would require the municipal bylaw to be appealed, with 'decision jurisdiction' under Ontario Municipal Board.

Development Charges Background Study

The *Development Charges Act* requires that a development charges background study be prepared to determine the following criteria for development charges policy:

- Forecast of population and new development;
- Capital Service Levels over a 10-year period; and
- A review of the built and anticipated Capital Works and an analysis of expenditure for a particular planning period (Commonly a 10 Year Planning Horizon).

As required, the City of Owen Sound in July of 1999 released a *Development Charges Background Study*, which was prepared by Hemson Consulting Ltd. Within the study, a look at the key steps for determining development charges for future growth related projects was outlined. This section focused on five principles for determining development charges:



- Growth Forecast;
- Service Categories and Historic Service Levels;
- Growth-Related Capital Forecast and Analysis of Net Capital Costs to be included in the Development Charges;
- Attribution to Types of Development; and
- Final Adjustment, which concentrated on determination of development charges as related to changes in growth capital costs.

The background study also focused on the calculation of development charges and ensuring that the calculation is in accordance with the *Development Charges Act*. In considering a calculation of development charges, population forecasts, service expectations and future service needs are strong variables, which greatly affect the level of charges municipalities impose through the development charge bylaw. In the case of the City of Owen Sound the following services were considered to be under the development charges ‘umbrella’:

Engineered Services

- Roads (Street Lighting, Utilities, Sidewalks etc...)
- Sanitary Sewage
- Storm Sewer
- Water Services

General Services

- Fire Protection
- Transit
- Public Works (Building and General Infrastructure)

Lastly, the study examined a key element of development charges, which is the administration of development charges. This examination looked into the designated services, collection of charges, indexing, charge exemptions, demolition, services in-lieu and reserve funds.

Since growth can occur rapidly, municipalities should encourage development charges to reflect the needs of the future as well as the present. In the City of Owen, the inflow of aging groups and the out flow of younger groups depict a place with growing issues surrounding seniors and how to deal with a scenario where new growth takes shape as a retirement industry and does not take the shape of the traditional new family oriented growth. In relating such a trend to development charges, the City should consider diversifying the charges to include a stronger general service base, which focuses more on services such as transit, fire protection and public works.

In 2002, Owen Sound had much lower than average (province wide) development charges in all categories.

The new Official Plan presents an opportunity for the City to develop a clear public process aimed at informing the public on the purpose, establishment and administration of Development Charges, as a well as an opportunity to examine the development charges implications of the



proposed new areas for growth and development and the services which should be accounted for through development charges.

5.3 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Challenges

Currently, population growth and development pressures are greater outside rather than within City limits which leads to a diversion of development efforts that are expensive to service and maintain. It also weakens the role of Owen Sound as the Regional Centre. In addition, Owen Sound is characterized by having modest population and employment growth. The combination of dispersal of development and the lack of a vigorous growth pattern clearly presents a challenge.

The idea of downtown intensification makes eminent sense as a matter of public policy. However, there are few vacant sites in the downtown although much of the existing building stock is older. Intensification will therefore have to take the form of developing the few vacant lots or redeveloping at higher densities. As development intensification proceeds, accommodating automobile parking will become a challenge.

Residential or commercial redevelopment along the waterfront and on former industrially used lands may be affected by contamination from previous uses. Part of the challenge will be to clean up these 'brownfield sites' to appropriate provincial standards. There are recent provincial initiatives to encourage brownfield reclamation, but it is still a serious impediment to redevelopment especially for residential or mixed-use purposes.

As a regional centre, Owen Sound continues to deal with changes to its urban boundary. With the capacity to provide services to areas outside its boundaries, Owen Sound is well positioned extend its boundaries. However, a set of policies that speak to annexation criteria is important. The Official Plan amendments that cover Sydenham Heights and Moores Hill suggest the need to include appropriate criteria in an Official Plan. This will also be important for the County to address in its emerging plan review, but the municipality should continue to articulate appropriate criteria.

Even with the highest population growth projections, annexation is not recommended as a strategy to accommodate future population growth. Annexation is expensive given the servicing requirements that must be accommodated. It also has the effect of dispersing development even further as previously discussed. Owen Sound appears to have sufficient land to accommodate future development within its own boundaries thereby making annexation unnecessary. As noted above, future development should happen on lands that can be or are already serviced fully by a municipal system. The key component is building on the existing municipal servicing capacity instead of permitting private servicing, and not to promote the development opportunities on a private servicing system.



It is also important for a regional body to ensure that development does not happen in a scattered and random way outside the City boundaries, and that the development of already serviced lands outside the city boundaries does not come at the expense of intensification within the city. The City will need to work closely with the County to ensure that development outside city limits contributes to the development of Owen Sound as a thriving regional centre.

Where the City is asked to extend partial municipal services beyond its boundaries, amalgamation of lands should be considered to allow the City planning control over parts of its urban fringe. Where both municipal sewer and water are extended beyond municipal boundaries, amalgamation should include the entire service area afforded by these services to protect the city's urban fringe and allow for planned growth.

Opportunities

The downtown core of the City of Owen Sound is a special and unique centre with the opportunity to expand and redevelop, and intensify along its streets and corridors. Policies should be designed to continue to strengthen and enhance this area. The potential for development for either residential or mixed use purposes along the inner harbour must be explored. The downtown is a great asset and could provide increased opportunities for people to live, work and play. The directions as outlined in the *Urban Design Master Plan* and the *Strategic Plan for the Corporation of the City of Owen Sound* should be reinforced. Strengthening residential uses in and around the core will support its long term visibility and address housing need in the city.

The Regional Health Centre is perhaps the most significant Facility in Owen Sound and the potential for finding uses that are complementary and synergistic to the Health Centre should be pursued. Perhaps programs can be devised in co-operation with Georgian College that include opportunities for housing or research facilities. In addition, the opportunities for complementary development within the Regional Health Centre's property could assist in its continued regional focus. Employment and economic spin-offs from institutional development benefit the city's regional centre initiative provided the associated costs are addressed.

The City might continue to consider business park development within the Industrial Park or re-designation of some more isolated areas of the Industrial Park for alternate uses provided appropriate services can be provided and the viability of existing industries is not compromised. Incentives encouraging industrial expansion might also be considered.



TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



6 URBAN DESIGN

The term Urban Design refers to the coordinated arrangement of buildings, spaces, streets and the many details within the public areas of the city to achieve qualitative public goals. These goals range from consistency of building forms to the sequence of visual events a visitor or resident might experience. It is the architecture of the city as a whole.

Good urban design is what makes a city or an area within the city look like it all fits together rather than being a chaotic mess. It also provides the structure to make it work well in terms of finding one's way around: knowing where to park to get to a particular store or being able to get around comfortably as a pedestrian or a wheelchair user.

A lot of urban design happens naturally through the desire of most people to fit their project in with its neighbours. There are also many different ways to achieve the same goals. However, not everyone sees the larger picture and decisions are often made with very narrow goals. Urban design is a tool, a way of defining goals and of implementing them. The purpose in setting out urban design guidelines is to identify and agree on common goals, describe how they might be met, and ensure that they are followed.

A major part of the planning process is essentially urban design. We use zoning bylaws not just to keep noisy uses away from our houses, but to define the setbacks of buildings from the street, the size or height of neighbouring buildings and how parking might be handled. Urban design includes the layout of streets, the size of building lots, and the form of buildings and how they relate to the street and each other. In addition, urban design provides for the relationship of open space to its surroundings and even the lighting and paving of our streets and sidewalks.

6.1 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

An official plan normally sets out how and when urban design must be considered. It also puts forward the goals and objectives to be met in the urban design process. Finally, it provides the mechanism by which urban design policies are implemented. The main section of the existing Official Plan dealing with urban design is Section 4.12. It states its general objective as follows:

“In order to enhance the amenity of the City of Owen Sound for urban living, Council should encourage improvements to the appearance of the City through landscaping requirements for new developments, encouragement for upgrading of landscaping for existing development, and continual improvement to City owned lands through upgrading of the present streetscapes and improvements to landscaping on other City owned lands.”

This fairly basic view of urban design is elaborated in four subsections which deal with tree planting and retention, the visual effect of overhead services, buffering between conflicting land uses and appropriate provisions for handicapped access. Of these, buffering between conflicting



land uses is the most commonly used urban design technique called for throughout the Official Plan.

Section 5.1.3 of the Official Plan addresses Street Design. This section describes the preferred curvilinear street pattern within a larger grid which was the hallmark of subdivision planning at the time it was written.

The Official Plan makes reference to various urban design issues in the sections dealing with specific areas. Section 2.5.3, dealing with the 9th Avenue East corridor between 4th Street East and 15th Street East, encourages urban design treatment “in order to preserve, maintain and enhance the attractive and prestigious character of this entrance to the City.” In section 2.6.2 the emphasis is on developing the Bayshore waterfront in a park-like manner complimenting the various developments anticipated. Section 3.3.3.3, also dealing with the Bayshore, calls for Site Design Guidelines to respect the architectural style of existing older buildings and height considerations.

Several of the 21 amendments to the Plan contain area specific secondary plans. Only two include significant urban design requirements. In amendment 19, outlining the West Harbour Planning Area, the City provides for the implementation of Area Design Requirements as identified in the West Harbour Redevelopment Plan. The most recent amendment, 22, deals with former industrial sites and railway corridors in the harbour and downtown. It provides that “the City may require that the developer provide for site design consistent with the standards established for the area in the Harbour and Downtown Master Plan.”

The Official Plan provides several mechanisms through which urban design objectives may be implemented. The Zoning By-law embodies design principals that prescribe many aspects of building form and the relationship with other buildings. The Site Plan Control By-law can require an agreement with the developer of a project to comply with various urban design requirements.

The Sign By-law can have a great effect on the way a community presents itself, although the Official Plan does not provide much guidance on this matter. The Property Standards By-law can control the condition of a building and its surroundings, but it doesn't deal with other urban design issues. A by-law creating a Heritage Conservation District is one of the best methods of securing urban design requirements in a heritage area. Community Improvement Plans can similarly be used to achieve urban design objectives.

6.2 TRENDS AND INITIATIVES

West Harbour Redevelopment Plan (WHRP)

When the City acquired the 19 acre vacated railway lands on the west side of the harbour from CN Rail in 1996, an opportunity arose to provide public access to the water's edge. An original



plan that mixed private and public development on the site did not attract any private initiative. In addition, the former Black Clawson Kennedy sites on the west side of 1st Avenue West were awaiting redevelopment plans. At Council's request, the Community Planning Advisory Committee, with city staff, produced the West Harbour Redevelopment Plan. In October 2000, Council adopted an Official Plan Amendment designating the West Harbour as a secondary planning area.

The WHRP recognises all the CN land east of 1st Avenue West as public open space. The vacated railway rights of way were transformed into a continuous public open space system along the water's edge. It is centred on the old CN railway station which presently houses the Marine and Rail Museum and the Visitors' Information Centre.

While the WHRP has achieved some substantial urban design objectives, it doesn't provide much actual design guidance. It does require review and comment from the Community Services Department for any public capital improvements and implements a holding designation in the zoning by-law to require the developer of lands between 1st and 2nd Avenues to come to an agreement with the City on matters of parkland dedication, site layout and area design requirements, among others.

Community Improvement Plans

The Downtown Improvement Area was established to help the existing businesses work together to improve the image and function of the downtown. Significant progress was made in 1999 with the establishment of the Façade and Structural Improvement Program, through a Community Improvement Plan that, is described in more detail in the Heritage section. This program provides incentives to repair, restore and retain the heritage facades of the downtown commercial buildings. It is one tool in the effort to achieve a coordinated appearance to the downtown area.

In 2001 the Community Improvement Plan was extended to include the West Harbour and the entire Inner Harbour and Bayshore Area to a point north of 32nd Street East. This initiative encourages redevelopment and infill on vacant lands, abandoned industrial sites subject of historical contamination and existing buildings. The plan provides for a Tax Incentive Program for the redevelopment of contaminated sites and a grant program to refund development charges for residential redevelopment or conversion of existing buildings.

Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan

The "Big Dig" has become the big opportunity for Owen Sound to implement a major urban design initiative. In preparation for the reconstruction of underground services along 2nd Avenue East and 10th Street East (the "Big Dig") the City commissioned a master plan study of the downtown and inner harbour areas commencing in May 2000. The study area included the Downtown Improvement Area (4th Avenue East to the Sydenham River and 7th Street East to 11th Street East), the Sydenham River and adjacent lands from the milldam to 10th Street, and the



Inner Harbour Community Improvement Policy Area (from 10th Street to the Pottawatomi River on the west side and to the Inn on the Bay on the east side.)

The *Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan* (OSHDMP) provides a good analysis of the area and its needs. The public consultations provided significant guidance in formulating qualitative goals for this area. The proposals put forward in the Master Plan provide urban design guidance for many issues. The Plan shows how better linkages to the river can enhance the downtown with the development of activities along 1st Avenue East. It also maps out an inner block parking strategy and potential infilling. Example, this plan deals with such items as trails, water activities and residential development. The next step is to incorporate these ideas into the Official Plan in general terms and in a secondary plan area.

The tangible results of the OSHDMP are the streetscape improvements along 10th Street East and 2nd Avenue East. The unifying effect of these improvements is dramatic. Of particular note are the elegant light standards, the railings around parking areas and gas stations and the improved sidewalks with mid-block crossings. The heritage value of the area has been amplified and celebrated. It is particularly significant that the changes that have been implemented are part of a larger concept and plan for the area.

6.3 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Urban design has become an increasingly important factor in present day planning. Municipalities all over North America are embracing processes that enable them to achieve larger, more comprehensive visions of their community's future. The public demands higher standards in the quality of the community environment we live in.

For Owen Sound, the main opportunities for the Official Plan lie in downtown redevelopment, waterfront redevelopment, new approaches to housing and new approaches to arterial commercial.

Downtown Redevelopment

The most significant trend in towns and small cities over the last 20 years has been the rapid movement of retail shopping to large facilities usually at the edge of the municipality and often outside of it. The "Big Box" retail stores with large parking lots are quickly dominating the retail business.

Many cities and towns suffer from declining downtown areas and have sought solutions to revive these ailing areas. The most successful municipalities have used strong urban design approaches along with strategic public and private investment to turn the tide. Communities like Woodstock, Collingwood and Cobourg have built a vision based on the heritage strengths of their downtown to achieve significant results.



A key element is an urban design vision of what the downtown should look like and how it should most effectively function. Agreements on how to deal with the varying styles of buildings, the gaps, parking access and the pedestrian environment is critical to making a downtown work. Urban design guidelines complete this vision with the necessary details.

Public investment has also been important in this turn-around, and Owen Sound has invested in this area. Confidence is the most important element in reviving a downtown. Incentives are usually needed to get all businesses involved. Public investment helps to create the confidence that attracts private investment.

Waterfront Redevelopment

Waterfront communities throughout North America have been undergoing radical changes as industries and the railways leave the waterfront areas. This has provided unique opportunities for their redevelopment, allowing cities to reconnect with the water's edge. The last 20 years has seen thousands of major projects which address this relationship near the heart of the city. The basic issue is public access versus private control. The contending uses are usually parks and housing. The issue has been handled in many different ways. The solutions are often matters of urban design. The scale of building, setback from the water's edge, access and views between buildings, pedestrian safety and residential privacy are just a few of the issues that urban design addresses.

The attraction of living close to the water's edge has made housing locations on the waterfront particularly sought after. In large urban areas developers attempt to get the highest densities and heights in these prime locations. This often runs contrary to the public opinion that big buildings block the view for everyone else. Even smaller communities have been faced with this pressure. Collingwood has a number of tall buildings on its waterfront and several housing complexes that block all public access to the water.

The waterfront is a limited resource and the pressure on its use will continue to rise.

New Approaches to Housing

Several new forms of residential design have emerged over the last 20 years. The most important are changes in subdivision layout, found in larger communities, but whose characteristics are also found in single lot developments in smaller communities. Small lot development with reduced street allowances has also been current for some time. More compact development means more efficient use of scarce land. It also means much more sensitive tolerances in the ways buildings relate to each other, particularly around issues of car parking and snow removal.

In recent years a design movement called "New Urbanism" has celebrated the attributes of traditional urban housing development: mainly rectangular block layouts with front porches toward the street and garages in the rear off a mid-block lane. A good example of this can be



found in the municipality of Orangeville. The Official Plan is an opportunity for Owen Sound to maintain its tradition of developing housing in this manner.

New Approaches to Arterial Commercial

New Urbanism has also brought a return to arterial streets with sidewalks and commercial buildings close to the sidewalks. Parking, rather than in a large lot in front, is beside or behind the business. Access to businesses is from the sidewalk. This creates traditional urban streets rather than the open space sprawl of the suburban model. Issues about where this approach should be encouraged and how it should be done are urban design matters that can be set out in the Official Plan. As they have been applied for many years in at least the downtown of Owen Sound, the Official Plan will be challenged to maintain that tradition as the city develops further.

Arterial commercial development can be retrofitted with upgraded urban design particularly where major service improvements are proposed. In particular, 10th Street West from the city limits east to 6th Avenue West will be a strong candidate for retrofitted urban design enhancements when road widening occur, as this areas contains under-used rear lanes and 30 metres of road widening width on each side of the street. Other candidate areas of a lower priority include 9th Avenue East south of 8th Street East and 8 Street East from downtown east to the city limits.



7 CULTURAL HERITAGE

Owen Sound's Cultural Heritage consists of its history, stories, its traditions, its families, its institutions, its places, its buildings, its art and its artefacts. This is, in fact, the identity of the community of Owen Sound. The unique aspects of Owen Sound's heritage, along with its natural environment, are what set it apart from other communities and what make it interesting for residents and visitors. Heritage is not just what has happened in the past, but is constantly developing as each generation puts its mark on the city.

The Cultural Heritage of Owen Sound is a key element in its effectiveness in attracting tourism, new residents and businesses. It is the living reflection of this heritage, its recognition and celebration that makes this an interesting and rich place to live. Pride in the community grows with awareness of its past along with the City's vision for its future.

Museums and libraries are the most obvious institutions that keep alive the stories and images of the past. The Grey County Museum, the Marine and Rail Museum and the Billy Bishop Heritage Museum provide excellent picture of the past in Owen Sound. The Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery presents art from former generations alongside the art of our present cultural creation. The Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library provides access to the written history of the city and the surrounding area with an excellent collection of local material. The city's heritage is also richly reflected in the buildings and places of Owen Sound. The city is fortunate to have such an impressive collection of beautiful houses, public buildings and heritage commercial buildings. The street improvements from the recently completed "Big Dig" have added to the potential of the downtown as an attractive heritage area. The neighbourhoods of Owen Sound are enriched by an amazing collection of heritage homes that reflect the prosperity that built the city. The harbour represents the story of the city's commercial development and dependence on shipping. Cultural heritage is constantly being formed by the culture of today. It is important to support the arts now, as they become the heritage of tomorrow.

7.1 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

The context for policies dealing with the cultural heritage of Owen Sound is vast, and there are numerous initiatives underway which help to illustrate the significance of the cultural heritage resources in Owen Sound.

Official Plan

The present Official Plan promotes Heritage Conservation with the following objectives 1.5.3 (x):

- To encourage the identification, conservation and enhancement of heritage resources.
- To encourage development in the municipality which, promotes sympathetic treatment and use of heritage resources.



The Plan includes a group of special policies relating to Community Heritage (Section 4.6) which emphasize:

- Preserving local heritage resources;
- Recognizing structures and buildings of significance;
- Incorporating local heritage into new plans and public works projects; and
- Preparing heritage conservation district plans where appropriate.

The City's Strategic Plan

The City has recently completed a Strategic Plan process that has resulted in a *Strategic Plan for the Corporation of the City of Owen Sound*. It was intended that the Strategic Planning process would precede the Official Plan review in order to provide direction to the latter process.

There are six Cultural Strategic Initiatives proposed in this Plan. The present Official Plan does not deal with most of the issues presented in these strategic initiatives. The City should consider how this much broader view of cultural heritage should be reflected in a new Official Plan.

“The City should give greater emphasis to preserving and celebrating its unique history through architectural preservation and historical interpretation.”

The emphasis of this strategic initiative recognizes, along with heritage preservation, the equally important aspect of celebrating the cultural heritage through historical interpretation. This “storytelling” is achieved through interpretive plaques, tours, museum displays, media features and community events. The Strategic Plan stresses the wide range of heritage issues that should be addressed such as First Nation’s and Black Heritage, the Women’s Rights movement, marine heritage, industrial heritage, Tom Thomson and Billy Bishop. The Official Plan must encourage the infrastructure to support these initiatives: plaques on streets, museums and galleries, and public spaces for events.

Heritage preservation is achieved through the retention of buildings, places and districts and the preservation of artefacts in museums.

“City should take a leadership role in cultural development in the region primarily through facilitation and support of local initiatives.”

This initiative focuses on dance, music and visual arts. It might also identify theatre arts. Although it primarily deals with promotion, it could also provide objectives of securing and retaining adequate venues for these activities.

“The City should play an active role in the development, enhancement and promotion of festivals and special events.”

An important initiative with respect to tourism, this is also a key to the cultural heritage of Owen Sound. The Festival of Northern Lights, Summerfolk, the Celtic Festival, Canada Day, Sno



Blast Salmon Spectacular and many other events are main features of community life in Owen Sound. The Official Plan could address the provision of appropriate places for these events to take place.

“The City should promote culture as an important element of the City’s “quality of life”.”

“City should continue to support the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library as a recreational, educational, knowledge and social centre and regional attraction for literary arts.”

The Strategic Plan encourages the development and enhancement of the library and art gallery as major cultural facilities and this should be reflected in the Official plan along with other potential facilities such as Escarpment Centre Ontario.

Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan

The Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan was described in the Urban Design section of this study. Completed in 2001, the Plan identifies a number of cultural heritage issues.

The Plan recommends (pp.97-98):

- Strengthening the Community Improvement Plan by increasing the contribution and potential tax incentives for façade and structural improvements;
- Preparing a Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan;
- Completing the historic inventory within the Downtown and Harbour;
- Creating entertaining “history happened here” stories around locations, buildings, and streets;
- Creating an extensive and exhaustive plaquing program around the downtown and harbour precincts and creating a variety of historic walks;
- Publishing a multi-media history on CD Rom and Web Site;
- Assisting in the creation of practical conservation and restoration guidelines for building owners; and
- Recognizing that Owen Sound’s history also has significant economic value through communications, marketing and event themes for the downtown and harbour.

Provincial policy initiatives

The primary source of Provincial policy relating to Cultural Heritage is in the Ontario Heritage Act, R.S.O. 1990. The Act has been amended many times since the City of Owen Sound Official Plan was enacted. It continues in its mandate of Heritage Conservation, Protection and Preservation and its three areas of initiative:

- Conservation of Property of Cultural Heritage Value or Interest (Designation of Properties by Municipalities);
- Heritage Conservation Districts; and



➤ Conservation of Resources of Archaeological Value.

Recent changes to the Act reflect the current practice of viewing heritage more holistically and not merely in terms of buildings and districts. The name of the Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) is to be changed to a Municipal Heritage Committee. Council may expand the mandate of its Municipal Heritage Committee so that the committee may advise it not only on matters relating to the designation of properties and heritage conservation districts, but also on other heritage matters that the Council may specify by by-law.

Under Part IV of the Act, municipalities will now designate property as having “cultural heritage value or interest” rather than “historic or architectural value or interest”. A description of the heritage attributes of a property must be included in the notice of intention to designate the property and in the register of designated properties kept by the clerk of the municipality. The description of the heritage attributes must also be registered on title and served to the owner and the Heritage Foundation when the by-law designating the property is passed. Any alteration of a designated property that is likely to affect its heritage attributes, as registered on title, requires the consent of the Council.

Council may also designate an area of the City as a heritage conservation district if it has the appropriate provision in its Official Plan. The Act requires that within a designated heritage conservation district, no owner of property shall erect, demolish or remove any building or structure on the property or alter the external portions of any building or structure on the property, unless the owner applies to the council and is given a permit. Subject to reasonable appeals, this allows the City to protect aspects of the district which have significant features that help to maintain its special character. It also allows the City to ensure that any new development will fit in well with the existing buildings. This provision is presently in the Official Plan, but no district has been designated.

The Act gives the Minister the power to designate a property to be of archaeological or historical significance. It then requires that no one can excavate or alter a property without a permit. Archaeological excavation requires a licence.

Designation of buildings and sites under the Ontario Heritage Act

A prime heritage conservation activity of Council is the designation of properties under the Ontario Heritage Act. The Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC) researches and proposes properties to Council for designation. This is done with the consent of the owner of the property. From a public point of view, designation provides some protection to these properties to ensure they retain the features that make them important physical records of our heritage. For the owner, designation can provide access to grants and assistance to preserve the property.

Prior to 1984, a group of local historians surveyed 55 buildings that they considered to be of particular architectural and historic interest. Of these, six have been designated under the



Ontario Heritage Act and a couple have been demolished. To date, a total of 25 properties have been designated in Owen Sound. They are shown on **Map 4, Heritage Inventory**. One designated property, the Main Street Program Office at 856/858 Second Avenue East, was delisted in 1996 at the owner's request.

Although the actual number of designations is not a measure of success in protecting heritage properties, it is a measure of the interest of the community in its heritage buildings. By comparison, Goderich has 87 designated properties, Kincardine has 41, Collingwood has 27 and tiny Paisley has 20.

Façade and Structural Improvement Program

In 1999 the City initiated a Façade and Structural Improvement Program for properties located in the City's Downtown Improvement Area. This is the area bounded on the south by 7th Street East, the north by 11th Street East, the east by 4th Avenue East and west by the Sydenham River. The program was implemented through a Community Improvement Plan.

The purpose of the program is to encourage restoration and rehabilitation of downtown buildings. The program provides capital grants of up to 50% of the costs, waiving of building and sign permit fees, phased-in tax increases and free staff expertise for appropriate façade improvements. The City has retained a Heritage Architect to assist applicants to develop a suitable renovation project.

LACAC reviews the applications and makes recommendations to Council. Designated properties are given priority. Projects are assessed on the basis of:

- Consistency with the City's design guidelines and the original architecture of the building;
- The extent to which the project addresses life safety and major structural deficiencies and/or improves the overall appearance of the property and,
- Overall benefit to the downtown and consistency with the Official Plan and other policies.

This program provides needed incentives to improve the quality of the downtown shopping area. So far there have been 13 applications for grant money of which 7 have been completed. It is hard to accurately assess the overall success of the program, as it coincided with the "Big Dig" and some income stresses on businesses in this area, but individual building have significantly improved using this program.

Community Improvement Plan for the Downtown and Harbour Area

The adoption of the Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan in 2001 led immediately to the adoption of a Community Improvement Plan for the City's Downtown, Inner Harbour and Bayshore Community Improvement Policy Areas. This plan incorporates the previously



approved Structural/Façade Improvement program for the Downtown area. It also provides grants for the cleanup of former industrial sites and tax relief for residential redevelopment or conversion.

The provisions for conversion of existing buildings for residential use is a further tool with which the City may retain existing buildings and, in particular, heritage buildings. This is encouraged with grants to refund development charges where there is no appreciable increase in the service demands resulting from the redevelopment.

Tax Relief for Heritage Properties

The City is presently creating a program to provide tax reductions or refunds for eligible heritage properties. This program could provide reductions of 10% to 40% in municipal property taxes to aid in maintaining buildings designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. While Council has approved this initiative in principal and is developing the criteria by which it might operate, the program was not funded in 2003.

Downtown Improvements

The streetscape improvements associated with the “Big Dig” have provided new awareness of the City’s heritage by incorporating the historic street names in the sidewalks at corners and by providing interpretive plaques.

7.2 TRENDS AND ISSUES

Future Growth in Owen Sound

The trend has been consistent toward an aging population in Owen Sound as well as in the surrounding areas. Retirees moving from other urban centres will fuel future growth in this city. The attraction of the city for retirees is largely based on four factors: a beautiful natural setting, a rich cultural environment, affordable housing and good services. These factors do not only apply to retirees, but also to younger families considering relocating to jobs in Owen Sound.

The cultural richness of the community is directly related to its cultural heritage. Stable neighbourhoods of well-maintained heritage houses attract new residents. Experience in other communities has shown that the newcomers are also the most active in efforts to protect the cultural heritage of their adopted community. This is therefore an increasingly important factor in attracting growth.

A More Comprehensive View of Heritage

Changes to the Ontario Heritage Act reflect a more comprehensive view of cultural heritage. What was once essentially preservation of historic buildings has been broadened to include the many other ways we learn about and celebrate our heritage. Many communities have a new sense of their past and are creating events, walking tours, heritage trails and heritage districts to



make the most of it. Owen Sound's "Doors Open" event in June is patterned after similar very successful events in other communities.

This trend is very likely to result in greater participation by the public in heritage initiatives. It could mean an increase in interest in designating heritage properties. It also means a need to organize heritage efforts in a more coordinated manner. It was recognition of this need that prompted the Province to change the LACAC into a Municipal Heritage Committee with the potential to broaden its scope of activities.

A Healthy Downtown

Cultural Heritage will play a large role in the future health of the downtown business area. The Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan points out that "preserving and communicating Owen Sound's history is not only the "right thing to do" - but it is an essential component of a strategy to attract more visitors and more trade downtown." As identified in the Downtown Master Plan, there is an opportunity to strengthen the retail and business environment through renovation and infill in a coordinated manner consistent with the existing heritage buildings.

An effective approach, which has been used by many communities, is to designate a heritage conservation district as previously described under Provincial Policy Initiatives. This would put in place a plan for the improvement, renovation, replacement and infilling of buildings within the district and would provide the vehicle for delivering incentives and grants. This plan goes beyond the initiatives in the community improvement area by including the added protection of controlling demolitions and development.

Cultural Heritage resources are finite. They only become more scarce over time. Steps taken today to conserve these resources are much more effective than those taken ten years from now.

Community Culture

Cultural activities serve to maintain our community connection to the past as well as to create the heritage for the future. There is a growing interest in cultural activities in the community, particularly as the population ages and a larger proportion are retired and pursuing cultural interests. The Official Plan should recognize the role of the City in supporting cultural activities and ensuring that the appropriate facilities are provided to house them.

Cultural activities range from festivals and community events to art, music, theatre, dance and literature. The preservation and interpretation of our heritage is also a cultural activity. Present facilities such as the Grey Roots Your Heritage and Visitor Centre, the Marine and Rail Museum, the Billy Bishop Heritage Museum, the Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery, the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library, the Roxy Theatre, OSCVI, Kelso Beach and the Bayshore Community Centre provide venues for cultural activities. The City policies should extend to creating new spaces and opportunities for cultural activities in public spaces, parks and



public buildings, including Escarpment Centre Ontario which provides a significant resource for natural heritage interpretation in accordance with provincial policy.

7.3 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

A Comprehensive Approach

Consistent with the new directions of the Ontario Heritage Act, the Official Plan objectives should reflect all aspects of cultural heritage: to identify, recognize, protect, enhance, promote and manage all heritage resources including historical records, art, artifacts, places, buildings and areas. Heritage properties should be designated as having “cultural heritage value or interest” rather than “historic or architectural value or interest”. The Owen Sound LACAC should be reconstituted as the “Owen Sound Heritage Committee” with a broader scope to include advice on heritage interpretation and events, and heritage planning.

Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan

The Official Plan should require the preparation of a Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan which co-ordinates the efforts of tourism, museum, business and community groups for the conservation and interpretation of Owen Sound’s cultural heritage. This plan should incorporate the development of a more complete heritage inventory for the city beginning with the Downtown and Harbour areas. It should also identify areas containing registered archaeological sites or lands with potential archaeological importance. An assessment of the need for the designation of Heritage Conservation Districts should also be included.

The Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan should set out interpretive programs such as an extensive plaquing program, particularly around the downtown and harbour precincts. Entertaining “history happened here” stories could be told around locations, buildings, and streets. The plan could also set out a variety of historic walks throughout the city and identify potential heritage events and media opportunities. Such elements as a heritage web site or a multi-media history on CD could be part of the plan. The Owen Sound Heritage Committee could be charged with the role of coordinating the implementation of the plan and its regular review and updating.

Heritage Conservation District for the Downtown

An area that should immediately be considered for a Heritage Conservation District designation is the Downtown Improvement Area. A plan for the creation of such a district could be developed in coordination with the development of the overall Heritage Conservation and Interpretation Plan. A plan for a Heritage Conservation District should include explicit design guidelines for development within the District. Along with this plan the City should develop practical conservation and restoration guidelines for building owners.



Incentives to Protect Heritage Resources

The Official Plan should provide the basis for the City to create incentives to protect heritage resources such as tax relief, bonussing of height or density, technical assistance or grants. This might be focused on properties designated under the Heritage Act or within a designated Heritage Conservation District. Such incentives can promote appropriate maintenance and improvement of heritage properties through designation. Existing programs such as the Façade and Structural Improvement Program can be supplemented and made more effective.

Protection of heritage resources also includes policies that require the City to take appropriate action to avoid damage or loss of such resources through its own operations. This could apply to various resources including potential archaeological sites.

Support of Cultural Initiatives, Events and Institutions

Official Plan policies should provide support for cultural activities by encouraging the provision and retention of museums, galleries, libraries, theatres, arenas and other suitable facilities within the city. This includes the Grey Roots: Your Heritage and Visitor Centre, the Marine and Rail Museum and the Billy Bishop Museum as repositories and promoters of local cultural heritage. It also includes support of the Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery as a national cultural attraction and regional centre for visual arts and programs and the Owen Sound and North Grey Union Public Library as a recreational, educational, knowledge and social centre and regional attraction for literary arts. It should be City policy to promote the inclusion of spaces for cultural activities and events in public spaces, parks and public buildings. In terms of programs, the City should also play an active role in promoting and supporting local festivals and events.

Escarpment Centre Ontario is an important initiative to link natural heritage with the County Grey Roots museum and archive.



TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



8 NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Owen Sound has a unique natural heritage system that contributes to the high quality of life that the people of Owen Sound appreciate. The natural heritage of the city is part of the regional ecosystem. Animal and plant life exist without the boundaries that humans use in their daily lives. As such the natural heritage of the city must be studied in the context of regional trends and issues.

Owen Sound and surrounding areas were reviewed for their natural heritage areas and linkages between them. Owen Sound has a tremendous opportunity to design and designate their Natural Heritage System with core areas of Black's Park, West Rocks, Inglis Falls, Hibou Conservation Area, and the key water linkages of Sydenham and Pottawatomi Rivers flowing into Owen Sound Bay. These natural areas provide travel routes for fisheries, amphibians, snakes, mammals, plants and people. The Natural Heritage System extends outward from the City into outlying townships where key conservation zones were mapped.

8.1 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

The Provincial Policy Statement 1997, the Grey County Official Plan, the City of Owen Sound Official Plan and Zoning By-law establish the environmental policy context that should be met by land use applications. The results of this analysis provide an updated environmental policy that is consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement for Natural Heritage.

This analysis found that wetland and rare species habitats require field study and enhanced policies to meet the above guidelines since no development is permitted in a) below. The City can select policy options that conserve beyond threatened and endangered status, through provincially rare to regionally rare wildlife before it becomes endangered.

Where development is permitted in (b) below, clear study approaches for defensible Environmental Impact Studies are provided. These study terms often become an appendix to the Official Plan for land uses adjacent to or within natural heritage.

Natural Heritage Provincial Policy Statement¹⁴

a) Development and site alteration will not be permitted in:

- *significant wetlands south and east of the Canadian Shield; and*
- *significant portions of the habitat of endangered and threatened species.*

¹⁴ Source: Ontario Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, Provincial Policy Statement (1997) Section 3, Natural Heritage sub-section 2.3



b) Development and site alteration may be permitted in:

- fish habitat;
- significant wetlands in the Canadian Shield;
- significant woodlands south and east of the Canadian Shield;
- significant valleylands south and east of the Canadian Shield;
- significant wildlife habitat; and
- significant areas of natural and scientific interest

if it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or the ecological functions for which the area is identified.

1.1.1 *Development and site alteration may be permitted on adjacent lands to a) and b) if it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on the ecological functions for which the area is identified.*

1.1.2 *The diversity of natural features in an area, and the natural connections between them should be maintained, and improved where possible.*

1.1.3 *Nothing in policy 2.3 is intended to limit the ability of agricultural uses to continue.*

County of Grey Official Plan

The County of Grey Official Plan identifies resource features that must be protected. These include:

- Hazard Lands
- Provincially Significant Wetlands
- Special Policy Areas (shallow overburden with karst topography)

No County wide mapping of significant fish habitat, woodlands, valleylands, endangered and threatened species, wildlife habitat and aquifer recharge areas has been undertaken (*in sensu*, County of Grey, 1999). Thus, it is intended that the additional natural environment information found on our **Map 5 Greenlands and Drainage** be considered for inclusion during the new Official Plan update. This is consistent with 2.8.5 (6), p. 43 of the Official Plan, which notes that new mapping by the County or appropriate authority will be recognized in Appendix A through an Official Plan amendment.

Natural Function Policies within the *County of Grey Official Plan* address the above noted PPS significant to the natural heritage system “to conserve and maintain the County’s prized natural qualities” (p.38, O.P.). The *County of Grey Official Plan* “attempts to maintain natural linkages so as to enhance ecological features, functions and processes”.

Resulting recommendations on updating environmental policy text to meet PPS direction is also provided for within the County Official Plan in Section 2.8.6. (2), where the local municipality based on provisions of a local Official Plan and/or Secondary Plan may develop EIS formats to address local environmental issues provided all matters contained in the County format are incorporated.



City of Owen Sound Official Plan

The Official Plan implements Section 2.3 Natural Heritage of the PPS through the following land use designations:

- Hazard Lands
- Escarpment Natural
- Open Space Land Use

Sections 2.10.3 through 2.13 address the above noted land use designations within the present official plan.

Greenlands text is referred to in section 2.10.5 indicating that Open Space natural wooded area improvement through reforestation is encouraged. Stewardship programs are suggested to effect this change by joint ventures between the Conservation Authority and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

The existing and potential future links within the Niagara Escarpment Trail System (NEC Trail System Report) should be evaluated for inclusion into the broader Natural Heritage System for the City of Owen Sound.

8.2 TRENDS AND ISSUES

8.2.1 A Natural Heritage System

The province of Ontario recommends that an ecosystem approach be taken in land use planning to identify and conserve natural heritage systems.

The ecosystem defined Hills (1959) is:

“An open natural system involving the interaction of living and non-living components, and the exchange of material, energy and genetic information occurring between living and non-living parts.”

Natural heritage is defined by the province as:

“Features and areas, such as significant wetlands, fish habitat, significant woodlands south and east of the Canadian Shield, significant valleylands south and east of the Canadian Shield, significant portions of the habitat of endangered and threatened species, significant wildlife habitat, and significant areas of natural and scientific interest, which are important for their environmental and social values as a legacy of the natural landscapes of an area” (PPS, pg. 16).

What does this mean?

Natural heritage is the connected parts of nature, wetlands, woodlands, open spaces and water. These spaces allow animals to find shelter, eat, hide from predators, bear young and live.



Natural Heritage Systems generally provide one or more of the following functions:

- Wildlife habitat
- Safe passage for migrating wildlife through forested corridors;
- Seasonal habitat like deer yards, waterfowl stopovers;
- Aquatic resources supporting fisheries and creekbank species;
- Early successional fields for grassland birds to court and nest; and
- Forests supporting frog breeding (Wood frogs), salamanders, interior birds.

Why is the natural heritage system of Owen Sound special?

In Owen Sound, the system of forest valleys, rivers and the Owen Sound Bay, wet open meadows, upland forests and exposed limestone slopes set the stage for the animal and plant life growing in response to this landform position and the local climate. Both boreal and southern affinity species live in this ecological zone.

Landform, therefore, is the main landscape that supported features (cores and corridors) rely upon and develop on. Key landform of the Owen Sound environment is both aquatic, and terrestrial.

Owen Sound Bay, with the Sydenham and Pottawatomi Rivers, represents the main aquatic and forested corridors of the Owen Sound area. These provide travel routes for fisheries, amphibians, snakes, small and large mammals as well as plant seed and part distribution.

These river features link in parts to large upland wildlife cores, which extend beyond the City limits. Thus it is necessary to include the outlying four townships that border the City in the designation of a Natural Heritage System. A second reason to include portions of neighbouring Keppel, Sarawak, Derby and Sydenham Townships in our review was a practical one of potential future development extending into those portions of the Natural Heritage System.

8.2.2 Designing the Natural Heritage System

Building blocks

Building blocks of the natural heritage system are large core areas, smaller linear corridors and weaker linkages between the core and corridor areas such as hedgerow features.

To designate wildlife cores and corridors, we used defensible science that guides areas larger than 30 hectares in size as core habitats, while wildlife corridors must attain at least 200 metre widths of forest cover. Restoration linkages and corridors with gaps greater than 20 metres in width were considered as candidate areas for restoration between cores and corridors.

Criteria for this exercise are available within provincial guidance documents to the Natural Heritage Policy (OMNR, 1997:2000). As with any guidelines, careful and practiced



interpretation is required. For example, to delineate a restoration area to widen forested corridors in the City centre, which would only result in mortality to wildlife from vehicles, and potential conduits for fire spreading. Cores are generally big enough to support forest birds when they attain sizes of 30 to 40 hectares on a landscape of healthy forest cover. Land areas are difficult to calculate within this criteria. However, because in the more open agricultural lands west of the City near Springmount, the same forest birds will live in much smaller cores because that is all that is available. Setting a minimum size of 40 hectares to conserve woodlands on an open landscape for example would not be appropriate as it would likely result in permitting removal of remaining small patches. Each case would be reviewed on its own merit and select criteria.

Core areas

Core areas are the large building blocks of any Natural Heritage System because they are large enough for wildlife to live, breed, eat and move within.

Core areas are large enough to maintain critical ecological attributes and functions including wetlands, woodlands, streams, critical wildlife habitat and designated areas such as ANSI and ESA (Background Study 4, Oak Ridges Moraine Planning Study, 1993).

Cores larger than 30 hectares support the natural and physical environment around us. Core habitat areas containing water features, wetland habitat, creeks or significant species scored higher than areas without these secondary features.

Using the Provincial Policy definitions of natural heritage areas, core areas can support the following ecological features and/or functions:

- Significant wetlands;
- Endangered and threatened species;
- Fish habitat;
- Significant woodlands;
- Significant valleylands;
- Areas of natural and scientific interest; and
- Significant wildlife habitat.

West Rocks Conservation Area provides a high quality environmentally sensitive area that can sustain passive recreational opportunities and enhanced public awareness about the site location and ecological features and functions found there. A forested linkage through to the City of Owen Sound should be contemplated, as features include earth science representation, rare flora and interior forest breeding birds.

Corridors

Corridors are the forested or open water and open space connections that connect natural areas. They can be thought of as flow paths that convey animals, plants and water between other natural areas.



The main aquatic corridors present in the City include portions of Owen Sound Bay, and the Sydenham and Pottawatomi Riparian river corridors.

Upland, or terrestrial corridors often follow the main landform character of this area. Wildlife corridor movement can be seen along portions of the Cape Rich Steps east of the Sydenham River and backshore along the eastern side of Owen Sound Bay, west of the Sydenham River along stony soils of the Bruce Peninsula, and on the limestone terraces of the Niagara Escarpment.

Corridor dimensions can range from hedgerows through to deep forested corridors of 200 metre widths and greater.

Corridors can consist of:

- Forested strips;
- Open waterbodies, streams;
- Slopes in excess of 12% (Riley & Mohr, 1994) based on known wildlife travel and erosion control functions; and
- Areas with social value if recognized by citizens and stewardship groups such as the Environmental Advisory Committee and Niagara Escarpment Commission. These areas can be identified in planning documents, such as a scenic vista with a designated look out gazebo and trail network for residents and tourists.

Linkages

Linkages are the spaces connecting the building blocks of cores and corridors together. On a map they are the smallest part of the Natural Heritage System, but are perhaps most important to ensure continued exchange of genetic material from one wildlife area to another.

Linkages can be:

- Fragmented woodland “pieces”;
- Remnant patches of farm hedgerows; and
- Areas previously forested but in need of restoration plantings.

Building blocks identified

All information layers have been synthesized, resulting in the base for a Natural Heritage System by:

- Overlay measured core, corridor and linkage areas;
- Assess the potential ecology content based on known standards; and
- Evaluate regional linkages particularly into future annex areas.

This design exercise resulted in naming the following building blocks of the Owen Sound Natural Heritage System (NHS):



Core aquatic and terrestrial areas of the Owen Sound Bay and upland forested zones including the Inglis Falls Core Area, the West Rocks Core Area, Hibou Core Area, Pottawatomi Core Area.

Key Wildlife Corridors radiating out from the above large wildlife core habitats included the Sydenham and Pottawatomi Riparian Wildlife Corridors, the eastern backshore to Owen Sound Wildlife Corridor, Niagara Escarpment Corridor and Cape Rich Steps broken sections of Bruce Trail Network forested corridors.

Potential connecting links

Linkages between the main cores and corridors were assessed and include the following:

- Creeks, valleylands, hazard land, floodplain;
- Groundwater discharge and recharge areas;
- Hedgerows, abandoned rail lines; and
- Potential restoration of vacant lands, such as the fairfields.

Forested and valley linkages include fragmented forest links emanating from the following core areas:

- West Pottawatomi Conservation Authority;
- West Rocks Conservation Areas (City part ownership);
- Inglis Falls Conservation Areas;
- South of Harrison Park Extension (Prior Conservation lands, now City of Owen Sound land holding);
- Hibou Conservation Authority;
- Owen Sound Mill Dam;
- Permanent Fish Sanctuary; Sydenham River above 8th Street Bridge; and
- West Rocks Conservation Authority (adjacent to Grey County Forest ownership).

Opportunities to link these existing elements of natural heritage with the Niagara Escarpment landform and Bruce Trail exist. Some of this land falls under hazard land designation, parkland and/or public ownership held by the City of Owen Sound and the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority.

8.2.3 Management of the Natural Heritage System

This report is one step to formalizing the management of natural landscapes. The EIS Terms of Reference supplied for appendices of the new Official Plan framework are provided so the City and its' residents have a tool to weigh the ecological impacts of land use against known standards of sustainable development (Appendix C).



The purpose of this review framework for impact studies is to ensure that development does not remove the ecological features and functions as addressed:

- Scheduling inventories to fill in data gaps such as mapping local and provincial wetlands, and designating Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) where applicable;
- Developing policy that reflects the natural heritage strategy of retaining natural spaces, restoring them and mapping the key cores, corridors and linkages;
- Monitoring programs required in the EIS terms of reference for large scale land use proposals will permit the City to better predict the cumulative effects of environmental impacts; and
- Limiting lot sizes adjacent to future designated greenspace of the NHS (eg. rear lots adjacent to Black's Park, West Rocks, Hibou), similar to policy within Section 2.4 of the Niagara Escarpment Plan.

Corridor management

Waterfront cycling and walking trails around Owen Sound Bay provide for excellent candidates to incorporate outer city linkages to existing regional trail systems through Meaford and Collingwood.

Agencies, such as the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, can be accessed via cross-country ski trail networks in the winter linking to the Bruce Trail. This feature of Owen Sound can be conserved through careful planning in light of future development opportunities within the city boundaries.

Open Space zoning generally captures hazard lands along main riverways and Owen Sound Bay with associated slopes to maintain stable valley and river valley banks. Over 220 hectares of parkland is dedicated to municipalities and public agencies, supplying 10 hectares per 1,000 residents in the Owen Sound community (Owen Sound, 1999).

8.2.4 Owen Sound Character

Overview of natural features

The City of Owen Sound straddles the Niagara Escarpment and is nestled within the glacially carved Sydenham River Valley. Its rich and diverse history is a resource that remains almost completely unnoticed and untapped despite the fact that the public drives by and walks over it on a daily basis. Throughout Owen Sound over 400 million years of the Earth's natural and cultural history lay under foot.

Long before the appearance of humans, and even pre-dating the extinction of Earth's dinosaurs some 65 million years ago, the area now known as the City of Owen Sound was home to an assortment of creatures; some familiar, but most quite bizarre, who lived in a place that was equally exotic – the shallow marine shelf of a tropical sea (*cf.*, Armstrong and Goodman 1990; Cooper *et al* 1990; Johnson *et al* 1992; Liberty and Bolton 1971; Okulitch 1995; Palmer 1999; Rudkin *et al* 1998; Tovell 1992; Winder and Sanford 1972).



Today, many of these creatures from a distant and alien past can still be seen -- frozen in time as fossils, in the bedrock that is exposed in readily-accessible outcrops in and around Owen Sound. The animals that are preserved in the rock from the Upper Ordovician (450-444 million years ago) and Silurian (441-410 million years ago) periods provide a revealing look into ancient environmental and landscape change in this once-tropical area.

Today, Owen Sound straddles the 44th degree of north latitude. Over hundreds of millions of years it has drifted, with the rest of the North American continent, well away from its original location south of the Equator - a tropical zone that we associate with coral reefs. Today, the remains of some of the world's best examples of Middle Silurian reefs can be seen in and around Owen Sound. Within the confines of the City of Owen Sound it is possible, in only a matter of hours, to travel hundreds of millions of years into the past as well as visit an equatorial coral reef!

Low-lying areas support native tree species assemblages of aspens, Large-tooth and Trembling Aspen on early succession sites, Eastern Hemlock-Tamarack-Black Ash-Spruce-Elm. In 1959 Dr. G.A. Hill at the University of Toronto used landform and wildlife characteristics to designate main groupings of vegetation and ecology and develop a relative measure of conservation values throughout Ontario. The City of Owen Sound falls within the ecological site district 6E-4, recently refined and revised by J.Jalava.

Landscape

Two main landform units make up the City of Owen Sound, the Cape Rich Steps to the east of Sydenham River and the Bruce Peninsula to the west of the riverbanks.

The City of Owen Sound falls primarily below the Niagara Escarpment, although some eroded portions do fall within the City limits. Adjacent surrounding townships beyond the City limits support local earth science representative sites of the Bruce Peninsula glacial sand plain.

Derby Township supports the dolomite examples of Amabel formation, with softer Cabot Head shales. Escarpment fissures common to karst topography here result in caves and crevices ideal for rare flora, including the diverse fern assemblages known to the Bruce Peninsula. This protected West Rocks site supports a groundwater discharge area, a spring emanating between two layers of escarpment face west of Black's Park and flowing northeast to join the Sydenham River.

Shoreline within the study area is characterized by bluffs, sandy beach, dune, rocky shore, low coastal plains, urban hardened shores and wetlands (Sandwell, 1994). The study area is characterized by the main glacial remnant valleys and the bay, which form Owen Sound Bay. The main river systems of Sydenham and Pottawatomi Rivers cut by glacial action and past ancient Lake Algonquin form many branched alluvial fans on their downstream flow path toward Owen Sound (Jalava, 1995).



Soils characteristic of river floodplains, shorecliffs, escarpment, and morainal till characterize this study area. On the Niagara Escarpment plains, soils are stony and thin. The deep cut river valleys support areas of organic deposition (muck). Glaciolacustrine deposits from times of ancient Lake Algonquin persist on lower valley slopes and valley bottomlands, characterized by silty clay loams (Gillespie and Richards, 1981). More detailed soils reports were available for West Rocks, which supports Breypen soils, Kemble limestone till, Sullivan sand and Tecumseth sandy soils on the plain below the Niagara Escarpment (Grey Sauble Conservation Authority West Rocks Report).

The main rivers bisecting the City provide floodplain and floodfringe areas, and talus slope where development is restricted. Mixed broadleaf forests are supported on upland riverbanks including American Beech-White Birch-Sugar Maple-Eastern Hemlock-White Cedar assemblages (pers. observ.). Basswood is also noted in vegetation surveys (Jalava, 1995), with a change in tree species characterizing the valley bottom of Sydenham and the Pottawatomi of Eastern Hemlock, Red Ash, Red Maple, White Ash and White Cedar.

Main landforms of the Owen Sound area support wildlife core and corridor components of the Natural Heritage System, and have been suggested as a clear way to itemize the natural areas. Landform includes the Cape Rich Steps, east of Sydenham River, this landform feature rises gradually from the valley bottom and is a representative feature of the numerous cuestas and shorecliffs of the ancient lake, and the deep cut glacial valley walls.

West of the Sydenham River, Bruce Peninsula soils, vegetation and land uses differ from the eastern portion of the City. Morainal stony soils with outwash sands are found here, and the farming communities west of the City confirm the presence of arable soil, cultivated for crops.

Portions of the Niagara Escarpment articulate with natural areas of the City of Owen Sound. The linkage role of this landform feature to wildlife movement across Owen Sound during seasonal migration movements is considerable and should be taken into consideration with any Natural Heritage System designation, particularly because of the Bruce Trail network.

Surficial geology

A review of land use planning applications, courtesy of Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, confirmed with ground truthed samples (Henderson & Paddon, 1991) that soils in the Sydenham Annexation Area east of Owen Sound consisted of silt to silty clay with clay deposits along Telfer Creek. Generally impermeable, with limited capacity for infiltration of precipitation during short duration storms. Soils are fine textured, derived from limestone till and in the Brookston Series of clay loams. Erosion appears evident from the Kenny Drain into near shore waters of the Owen Sound Bay, Therefore, it is important to control erosion during development of the Kenny Drain watershed).



Predominant soils within the Pottawatomi Watershed consisted of muck, Osprey Loam and Harkaway Loam (Henderson & Paddon, 1991). Conversely, the easterly tributaries into Owen Sound Bay at the Kenny Drain are clay soils, resulting in little to no baseflow contribution from shallow groundwater resources. Rain and spring snow-melt events in this catchment are characterized by a large red coloured plume of suspended clay in Owen Sound Bay (in sensu, HP, 1993). Shallow soils and/or exposed bedrock in the city's East Bluffs area and parts of the Special Policy Area (Sydenham Heights) are constraint to the development due to potential costs of excavations.

Bedrock geology

Special Policy Areas within the County of Grey Official Plan identify potential and known areas of karst dolostone and deeper limestone. Potential for nutrient or bacterial contamination through cracks (fissures) in this type of overburden is to be determined through impact assessments adjacent to designated areas. There are no known locations within the city where karst topography will impact on development potential.

Drainage

Surfacewater patterns in and around Owen Sound Bay can be complex. For instance, neighbouring Sarawak Township to the north has approximately 34 minor drainage basins along its easterly boundary (Gamsby & Mannerow, 1990).

The Pottawatomi River (west of town) drainage basin includes part of the extensive Long Swamp riparian wetlands west of Springmount that straddle Derby and Sarawak Townships.

8.2.5 Owen Sound Ecology

The physical and biological resources of the City have been assessed through through this review of existing environmental information and June 2003 site visits.

Findings are presented using the Provincial Policy Statement terminology for natural heritage. These elements of ecology, the ecological features and functions, required categorization first in order to permit the City to then be in a position to rank their relative significance, and decide upon the various environmental policy text options available to assign value and conservation strategy.

Significant Wetland Habitat

Wetlands: refers to lands seasonally or permanently covered by shallow water as well as lands where the water table is close to or at the surface. Four major wetland types are bogs, fens, marshes and swamps.

Periodically soaked or wet lands being used for agricultural purposes which no longer exhibit wetland characteristics are not considered to be wetlands for the purposes of this definition.



Aerial photography, coupled with existing environmental information, finds that a number of areas such as Inglis Falls may score high for the Special Features Score within the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Wetland Evaluation Manual for Southern Ontario.

Meadow Marsh wetland habitats, for instance, are of high potential along undisturbed portions of Owen Sound Bay shoreline, as well as the Atlantic Coastal Plain flora. The City, as directed by Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), can decide to implement local wetland conservation and add environmental policy, conserving for both local and provincially significant wetland.

Wetland habitat can be the location of sensitive hydrological features such as areas of groundwater discharge or recharge. Karst Topography with potential groundwater discharge and recharge strong degrees of relatedness is possible, given the mapped location of Special Policy Areas in both Derby and Sydenham south of Owen Sound.

Fish Habitat

Fish habitat: means the spawning grounds and nursery, rearing, food supply, and migration areas on which fish depend directly or indirectly in order to carry out their life processes.

Owen Sound Bay of Georgian Bay and Lake Huron is the main waterbody falling within this study area. During the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Shoreline Management Plan, Sandwell Inc. identified thirty-nine reaches of shoreline in the Grey Sauble Watershed (Sandwell Inc., 1994).

The Owen Sound Bayshore Development Planning Study notes that during initial settlement in the 1800s, waterfront was the focus of agricultural, residential, commercial, industrial, and transportation activities (City of Owen Sound, Grey-Sauble Conservation Authority, 1974) and this should be recognized.

The main rivers moving through the City of Owen Sound are the Sydenham and Pottawatomi Rivers, but many smaller intermittent creeks also contribute seasonal flow to the downstream fisheries habitat of these main rivers and Owen Sound Bay. They are considered to be *contributory fish habitat* by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, with 15 metre and 30 metre development setbacks from creekbanks for warm and coldwater features, respectively. Hazard mapping of riverine steep slopes is depicted on Map 5 is partly based partly on slope studies by Trow (1988) and Grey Sauble Conservation Authority.

Specific locations where fisheries habitat enhancement programs can be aimed include the Owen Sound Mill Dam at 2nd Avenue. Enhancing creekbank vegetation benefits the spring run of Rainbow Trout, fall Chinook and Coho Salmon as well as the resident year round fishery, by shading the river.



Habitat can be enhanced through joint projects with the Sydenham Sportsmen's Club, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority to enhance and create spawning habitat areas. This action would have merit for both the fishery and the associated eco-tourism values for the City of Owen Sound. Shoreline protection at the Sydenham River, behind the YMCA, has prevented erosion and created fish habitat.

Migratory Passerine and/or Shorebird Stopover

Study area visits undertaken during different seasons (SAAR, in house field notes) confirms the importance of Owen Sound Bay for waterfowl stopover, staging and nesting. Riverine valleys provide for resident winter birds and summer resident breeding birds including interior forest bird species.

The Niagara Escarpment Plan guidelines to limit microwave tower heights should be considered in known areas of seasonal migratory bird flight paths. There are no migratory bird paths identified within the city limits.

Breeding Birds

Birds species documented within and near the study area by Breeding Bird Atlas coordinators and local naturalists were reviewed.

Field inspections confirm that Owen Sound supports interior forest breeding birds that travel from the neo-tropical regions of Costa Rica, Cuba and other destinations back to Owen Sound every summer. Forest sizes required for their life cycle are investigated by Peck & James (1983) with larger forest patch conservation mitigating against the interior Wood Thrush, Ovenbird, Eastern Wood Pewee for instance dispersing to adjacent lands (Galli et al., 1976). Habitat sizes for birds were reviewed and considered when setting our minimum target wildlife core size of 30 hectares for the Natural Heritage System.

Significant Breeding or Feeding Habitat For Threatened or Endangered Species

Threatened species: means any native species that is at risk of becoming endangered through all or a portion of its Ontario range if the limiting factors are not reversed.

Endangered species: means any native species, as listed in the Regulations under the Endangered Species Act, that is at risk of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its Ontario range if the limiting factors are not reversed.

There is potential for the endangered grassland bird, the Loggerhead Shrike, on agricultural landscape falling on potential annexation lands outside the city. Future environmental impact studies need to consider this bird. The potential for the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake, a threatened status snake known along Georgian Bay, may be considered, however, it appears that the snake is located north, near Wiarton.



Significant Woodlands

Woodlands: means treed areas that provide environmental and economic benefits such as erosion prevention, water retention, provision of habitat, recreation and the sustainable harvest of woodland products. Woodlands include treed areas, woodlots or forested areas and vary in their level of significance.

A five-year comprehensive study undertaken by Riley, Jalava and Varga (OMNR, 1996), includes lists of observed flora and fauna, as well as maps areas of low to high concentrations of specific wildlife, which should be assessed when designating the final Natural Heritage System, during Official Plan process (Appendix D).

Significant Valleylands

Valleylands: means a natural area that occurs in a valley or other landform depression that has water flowing through or standing for some period of the year.

The post-glacial valley known present day as the Sydenham River meets the provincial criteria for a significant valleyland and should be conserved regardless of the slope coefficient along the river. Valleylands are delineated on Map 5 as hazard lands, based on the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and Trow data (1988).

Landform conservation of Niagara Escarpment within the Niagara Escarpment Plan should be adhered to in all future City direction. Hazard land mapping currently exists as a two-tier zoning mechanism, which could be simplified into a one zone strategy for implementation.

The Bothwell Creek watershed has been mapped to establish flood plain locations within Special Policy Area No. 1 (Sydenham Heights). The City has designated these areas as hazard land and identified policies that would protect the floodplains around this coldwater fishery. This will ensure these corridors are protected and remain part of the City's natural systems rather than implementing artificial floodplain control methods. The new Official Plan must maintain this approach and expand the floodplain into the Industrial Park.

Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)

Areas of natural and scientific interest (ANSI): means areas of land and water containing natural landscapes or features that have been identified as having life science or earth science values related to protection, scientific study, or education.

A Regional Life Science ANSI of an incised gorge is designated at Inglis Falls Forest, covering 140 hectares south of the City limits near County Road 18 and Highway 6/10.

Visitors can view waterfalls, river, limestone bedrock plain, cliff and mantled escarpment slope features. The ANSI also supports White Cedar-Eastern Hemlock escarpment rim forest and a wet



cliff spray zone, also the best examples of this vegetation in the Grey Section. Seepage talus areas also support White Ash-White Cedar along glacio-lacustrine deposit areas of river bottomlands (Jalava, 1995).

Based on our review we suggest that conservation land holdings such as the Inglis Falls, West Rocks and Black's Park area be further evaluated for potential ESA (Environmentally Sensitive Area) status during Natural Heritage system designation of a greenland system that straddles administrative boundaries. Black's Park adjoining West Rock's alone supports thirty different species of ferns (Mahar, pers.comm.).

Below are listed the ecological features and functions at West Rocks as an example of how to rank conservation targets for the proposed Natural Heritage System.

Ecological Features and Functions Scores:

- Groundwater discharge is at base of escarpment.
- Candidate Earth Science site supports a 425 million year old erosional formation and rugged cracked dolomite crevice caves.
- Diverse plants include Green woodland orchids, Blue-eyed grass, Silvery spleenwort, Maidenhair Spleenwort, Rattlesnake Fern, Royal Fern, Oak Fern, Christmas Fern, American Hart's-tongue Fern, Slender Cliffbrake, Walking Fern, Bulbet Fern, Goldie's Fern, Fragile Fern, Smooth Cliffbrake.
- Interior Birds include Eastern Wood Pewee, Wood thrush, Flycatchers, Ovenbird, Pileated Woodpeckers. Old growth specimens include White Elm (North Grey Region Sauble Valley Conservation Authority, 1977-79).

Rarities

Meetings and discussion with Owen Sound Field Naturalist representatives confirm the City supports floral rarities that fall within our proposed greenspace or NHS.

8.2.6 Natural Heritage System Designation

A portion of the Natural Heritage System of rivers, forested hills, valleys and open space fall within conservation lands held by a combination of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and the City of Owen Sound.

To restore breaks in the system through planting programs, or to conserve nature falling in private land ownership, efforts in both education and land acquisition are likely required in order to arrive at a 20 year long term vision of natural heritage consistent with the Natural Heritage Provincial Policy Statements. Programs might include incentives, such as free native seed distribution to the community for front and rear yard plantings.



Each of the main natural areas can be evaluated for their ecological content using a template or chart format similar to that implemented by the County of Simcoe for their Greenland designations (See Appendix E for example).

8.3 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Policy options

The concept of ecological feature and function can be incorporated into the upcoming Official Plan, and EIS Terms of Reference, to ensure that the PPS meaning of negative impact is properly assessed.

Negative impact: In regard to natural heritage features and areas, the loss of the natural features or ecological functions for which an area is identified.

Significant: In regard to features and areas in policy 2.3, ecologically important in terms of features, functions, representation or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system. Criteria for determining significance may be recommended by the Province, but municipal approaches that achieve the same objective may also be used.

In regard to other matters, important in terms of amount, content, representation or effect.

A *feature* is a physically tangible area like a lake, creek, forest, meadow. The creek may support a *function*, like a spawning Brook Trout in the Sydenham River or a spawning Lake Trout on a rock shoal of Owen Sound Bay.

After designating the Natural Heritage System with a restrictive zone such as Environmental Protection or Greenland Designation, municipal approaches often rely upon the interpretation of significance for determining consideration.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing directives are clear that the decision making for what determines significance, is the jurisdiction of the municipality. PPS definitions can guide us to evaluate natural features and functions against how plentiful they are relative to the broader landscape of an ecological site district, or how valuable ecology in general is to the community.

Ecology can be referenced against what is available within the ecological zone, or ecological site district (See **Map 6 Southwestern Region Ecological Site Districts**)

Greenland designations

If two-tiered Greenland designations (high constraint, low constraint) were applied to the natural heritage system with land use permitted in low constraint zones, potential drawbacks exist. If a



range of land use is permitted subject to the approval of a successful environmental impact study, the chances of conserving the natural heritage system will dwindle with each “successful” EIS submitted.

Encroachment, over time can obliterate the feature or function identified for conservation. The land use then becomes an issue for debate by both sides at, tribunals such as the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

This can be avoided. It is possible to a) streamline each future Official Plan amendment and Zoning By-law application, and b) most importantly, maintain the integrity of the planning document intent to conserve the natural heritage of Owen Sound in the long term, through:

- Careful delineation of key elements in the Natural Heritage System; and
- Zoning Designations for key elements that preclude development.

This avoids the removal of greenlands designations that will happen if development is permitted conditional on submission of a favourable environmental impact study.

Incomplete use of the PPS “significance” concepts can lead to studies that permit removal of Greenland designations after finding no “significant” ecology. This undermines the concept of connecting links, corridors and open space components of any natural heritage system, but function nonetheless in facilitating animal movement between seasonal areas. Otherwise, the environmental policy and Greenland strategy fail to meet their goals and in fact conserve isolated natural areas that have no means of distributing plants or animals between locations.

Implementing a Natural Heritage System Strategy

Identifying the key wildlife core areas, corridors and linkages between these areas requires a support environmental policy and zoning framework to ensure that Owen Sound continues to retain their unique landscape and character.

This City is one where residents and tourists fish the rivers and bays, bird watch and enjoy shady lanes. Maintaining this heritage over time requires that supporting documents, including environmental schedules and policies in the upcoming Official Plan document, be developed. The City is fortunate in this regard to have in place the environmental stewardship of their planning department, Public Advisory Committee, Owen Sound Field Naturalists and Sydenham Sportsmens Club, to assess and implement the greenland natural heritage system options presented in this report.

The City of Owen Sound has a tremendous opportunity to design and designate a Natural Heritage System consistent with the current Provincial Policy.

Wildlife cores, corridors and linkage conservation can build upon existing conservation lands and programs including:

- The world biosphere Niagara Escarpment;



- Handshake agreement locations of the Bruce Trail Network;
- Restoration areas targeted by the Sydenham Sportsmens Club; and
- Conservation holdings of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and City.

A natural link exists between the eco-tourism destinations of Inglis Falls Conservation Area and Black's Park, linked by trail systems through West Rocks Management Area and Pottawatomi Conservation area, including the recent 17 hectare Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy purchase. This should be strengthened through landowner agreements and tree planting at designated restoration areas

The wildlife corridors along the eastern back-shore of Owen Sound Bay link to the Hibou Conservation Area with many aquatic linkages to Bothwell's Creek, a prime Rainbow trout fishery being monitored by the Sydenham Sportsmens Club. The position of Bothwell's Creek lends itself well to designation as a north-southerly greenland corridor incorporating the decommissioned CP Rail line in an expanded trail system akin to the Meaford-Collingwood network.

The future Official Plan for the natural heritage system design should incorporate neighbouring studies, such as the ongoing Meaford Official Plan update. This will ensure that green spaces are centred across the political boundaries, consistent with linkage goals of Provincial Policy Natural Heritage Statement.

Environmental awareness can be increased for the community and visitors. Efforts can be directed at downtown and surrounding wilder habitats by:

- Installing native plants outside key community areas such as the library and City Hall to show pride in the unique natural heritage of Owen Sound detailed with ecology signage.
- Increase signage and awareness of escarpment and side trail networks. Key locations can be selected to showcase unique but hardy ferns able to withstand foot traffic and viewing year round, unlike orchids.

In designing the main Natural Heritage System we considered the regional context of surrounding headwaters and existing trails along the Niagara Escarpment to ensure connectivity and long term conservation of the hydrology that supports the unique fisheries and rare plant growth.

Potential connecting links including abandoned rail and road allowances have been considered also in light of strategic eco-tourism designations such as the future Grey Roots Site and the fishing opportunities for Chinook salmon and Rainbow trout.

Appendix F (Supplementary Planting for Sydenham River Corridor and Linkage to Adjacent Natural Areas) has been provided to assist in urban design standards for native plant landscaping. The emblem Lady-slipper plant species can be planted in strategic City locations to increase awareness of the exquisite natural heritage that shapes Owen Sound.



The City is rich in knowledgeable individuals and groups to facilitate these goals, some examples being:

- Communities in Bloom
- Sydenham Sportsmens Club
- Owen Sound Field Naturalists
- Sydenham Bruce Trail Club
- Owen Sound Heritage Tree Survey
- Canadian Fern Society
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- Grey Sauble Conservation Authority
- Owen Sound Garden Club

The residents of Owen Sound already have an observed relationship with the natural environment, seen through the anglers strolling through Main Street, the hikers accessing portions of the Bruce Trail, cross country skiers near the Conservation Authority, birders along the Owen Sound Bay.

The natural heritage system simply gives voice to the expressed appreciation of nature through mapping the key natural areas and coupling the map with recommended environmental policy direction for future land use applications. Some of these, however, will conflict with other policy directions as described below. As part of the Official Plan process, Council will have to reconcile its priorities with respect to some of these challenges.

Treed Wildlife Corridors vs Arterial Roads

Main linkages used by wildlife across the City of Owen Sound are found along the rivers bisecting the City. Inglis Falls, Hibou and Pottawatomi Conservation Areas fall, in part, along the Sydenham and Pottawatomi River, and Owen Sound Bay with more naturalized open space zones of recreational waterfront downstream on the Sydenham at Harrison Park and Kelso Beach.

As noted earlier, Moore's Hill is well situated with greenspace, and opportunity through future Official Plan frameworks to enhance treed linkages in other neighbourhoods exists for the newer areas still undergoing development, East Bluffs and Sydenham Heights.

Traffic flow estimates provided by the City of Owen Sound engineering division (1999) were reviewed before suggesting an enhancement of existing greenspace over time. Within the urban core, greenspace is directed to increase bird and plant diversity, not large mammal travel. To integrate this biodiversity within a signed trail system also provides the opportunity to increase eco-tourism.

Future development of road network will need to limit further river crossings in order to maintain water quality suitable for sustaining the existing aquatic community within Sydenham



and Pottawatomi Rivers and Owen Sound Bay. The many “missing links”, in terms of east-west roads, could be utilized for increased trail networks and eco-tourism incentives.

Aquatic Linkage Management

The City of Owen Sound was forged because of the location along the shores of Georgian Bay at Lake Huron. Commerce depended upon the waterway to transport natural resources and is continued today to a lesser degree. The Bayshore Area provides excellent waterfront recreation including a summer and winter fishing seasons.

The importance of the harbour, bay and meandering Sydenham River cannot be underestimated. The original town site was first named Sydenham as Charles Rankin began establishing it in 1837. It is still common to see anglers with their rods walking through the City streets to the river, and this function should be maintained through careful planning for future location and density of land use.

Enhancement Opportunities

Rainbow and Brown Trout known to the local fishery are more susceptible to changes in suspended solids, water temperature and water clarity than their warmwater fish species. Incentives to continue vegetating creekbanks of key Rainbow trout creeks, such as Bothwell Creek, in tandem with the Sydenham Sportsmens Club should be considered.

It is important to integrate stormwater management ponds into present day development, as was done for the Industrial Park applications for Wal-Mart and Home Depot.

Creek plantings enhance wildlife diversity while buffering for pollutants. Scientific field research experiments show that even 18 metres of continuous vegetation can assist with water quality enhancement. The challenge of identifying target zones for this type of vegetation “upgrade” is to not interfere with age old traditions the City is proud of. This includes the winter show of lights along the Sydenham riverbanks. Plantings further water quality objectives as noted above, and create a shady tree and shrub canopy over the river to help maintain the 18 Celsius cold temperatures required by trout in summer months.

Enhancement areas

Natural areas with potential for enhancement include:

- Gaps along the forest cover of the Sydenham, Pottawatomi River, and Bothwell’s Creek;
- Fragmented breaks in vegetation along Owen Sound Bay; and
- Fragmented sections of broader forest corridors identified on the Natural Heritage System map.



9 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Owen Sound is a regional centre serving both Grey and Bruce Counties. This role has contributed greatly to Owen Sound's stable commercial and industrial base. The commercial sector has been growing with the introduction of new retail formats such as 'big box' outlets. The City continues to take pride in and support the Downtown as its primary business district. Industrial land is available and the City continues to aggressively market the advantages of locating in Owen Sound. The City is part of a vibrant regional tourism area. The tourism sector holds great promise for local economic growth. Owen Sound can continue to play its regional centre role by offering hospitality services and becoming a destination, in its own right, with the development of new destination-quality facilities such as Escarpment Centre Ontario and the proposed conference centre and resort.

Continued economic vitality is critical to maintaining the high quality of community life enjoyed by the residents of Owen Sound.

9.1 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

There are several policies and initiatives in place that support, promote and enhance economic development in Owen Sound.

Official Plan

Although the Official Plan was completed some time ago, many of the policies it stated remain in many ways relevant to the current state of economic development today. The economic objectives of the OP include:

- To encourage increased employment opportunities through encouragement for expansion of existing industry and commerce and development of new industry and commerce to diversify the local economy so as to enhance and sustain Owen Sound's place as the commercial and industrial focal point in Grey and Bruce Counties;
- To encourage the continued development and promotion of a strong tourist industry which should include development of the waterfront for tourist-related facilities and services, provision, management and promotion of an active sports fishery, protection of the natural environment, development of accommodation, entertainment and demand generating tourist facilities, encouragement for year round recreational facilities, regional/district planning and promotion of tourist industry;
- To ensure the City has the means to obtain full potential for economic growth with respect to orderly and rational development of the community as a whole; and
- To ensure a mix of industrial/commercial and residential assessment.

Further objectives for commerce focus on development of the Central Business District and the inner harbour as well as other commercial areas serving regional and neighbourhood needs.



Industrial objectives address provision of serviced industrial land and the type of industrial uses being encouraged.

Official Plan policies specifically address:

- The downtown (central business district) and other commercial nodes;
- The waterfront;
- Industrial lands;
- Tourist-related development; and
- The Niagara Escarpment.

Considerable time has passed since these policies were adopted in 1984. The economy both locally and globally, has changed significantly. Economic considerations not contemplated at the time of the current plan include: growth of the telecommunications and technology sector; changing market demands in the tourism sector; loss of all rail transport; and, growth of small and home-based business. Commercial growth has been realized and new formats such as the 'big box' have emerged. Similar industrial growth has not occurred despite local efforts to attract new investment.

The City of Owen Sound considers the local economy to be one of its primary areas for action. From the current corporate Strategic Plan to feasibility studies for tourism facilities, the City demonstrates its commitment to expansion of the local economy.

The City and its regional partners have recently completed a number of plans and studies concerning commercial, industrial and tourism development. This section highlights the key recommendations. These findings and recommendations will assist in the development of more focused land use policies that will effectively support the future growth of the local economy. A substantial amount of economic analysis is found in these studies and has not been reproduced here. Readers are urged to refer to these sources for detailed commercial, industrial and tourism data.

The Strategic Plan for the Corporation of the City of Owen Sound

The City's strategy establishes several economic development initiatives:

- Proactively lead the County, other local and regional economic development groups and educational bodies to forge a Grey/Bruce/Owen Sound regional economic area.
- Identify Owen Sound as the hub for agricultural based businesses and market its agricultural assets and opportunities.
- Recognize the economic opportunities present by maintaining and enhancing the City's infrastructure.
- Develop strategies that focus on both retention and attraction of business.
- Be governed by the principles of sustainable development and planned growth in retaining long-term lifestyle and economic opportunities.
- Be committed to pro-business plans, policies and practices, which encourage economic growth.



- Support initiatives that develop a much more competitive and renewable workforce throughout the region.
- Continue to give a high priority to initiatives that directly support small businesses.
- Pursue divestiture of the Owen Sound Harbour once the Federal Government has improved the condition of the harbour walls, dredged to an appropriate depth and confirmed appropriate revenue opportunities to cover operating and maintenance costs.
- Give greater emphasis to preserving and celebrating its unique history through architectural preservation and historical interpretation.
- Take an active leadership role in promoting and implementing a regional approach to tourism (Grey/Bruce/Owen Sound).
- Develop Escarpment Centre Ontario as a provincially significant tourist destination.
- Facilitate the development of additional conference capacity in Owen Sound.
- Maximize the potential of its natural attractions to create a major tourist destination.
- Continue its efforts to revitalize the Downtown as a unique tourist destination.
- Operate Visitor Information Centre
- Add conference capacity to the City

Tourism Action Plan 2003 ‘draft’ (City of Owen Sound, 2002)

- Market Owen Sound as the hub of tourism in the Grey/Bruce region.
- Develop cultural tourism.
- Develop ecotourism emphasizing location in the UNESCO Biosphere reserve.
- Develop year round outdoor recreation opportunities and a sports centre.

Joining Forces: Regional Tourism Marketing Review in Grey, Bruce and Owen Sound (the Tourism Company, 2000)

- Western Grey, Bruce and Owen Sound can be defined as a tourist area.
- Owen Sound functions as the hub and focal point.
- Extend the tourist season into the shoulder seasons and winter months.
- Emphasize overnight and extended stays.
- Increase visits from core markets – southern Ontario, northern US states and Europe
- Offer outdoor adventure; festivals and events; cultural heritage interpretation; rural experiences.

Premier Ranked Tourist Destinations: An Evaluation Framework and its Testing in the South Georgian Bay Region (Malone Givens Parsons, 2001)

- Owen Sound is part of a prime Ontario tourist area – South Georgian Bay – which attracted over 2.8 million Canadian travelers in 1999 (a large portion of the visitors come from southern Ontario’s large urban centres).
- Visitors are seeking outdoors activities although participation in cultural heritage activities is increasing.
- There are relatively low expenditure yields from these visits.



- Extended stays are not being achieved due to lack of destination-quality attractions and quality accommodation.
- Still largely a summer destination.
- Have not yet effectively penetrated markets outside of southern Ontario.
- Investment opportunities for Owen Sound include: Escarpment Centre Ontario; public open space on the waterfront; transient docking; visitor accommodation and residential development on harbour lands; cultural and heritage interpretation; regional trails and other linkages.

Escarpment Centre Ontario: Visitor/Interpretive Centre Business Plan (the Tourism Company et al, 2001)

- This is a proposed 17,000 sq. ft. facility on land owned by Grey Sauble Conservation Authority located south of Owen Sound near Highways 6 & 10.

Grey County Heritage Project (ACP: Cultural Research & Blue Sky Design, 2000)

- It resulted in Grey Roots, a destination quality, regional heritage facility of on lands south of Owen Sound and in close proximity to the proposed Escarpment Centre Ontario.

Feasibility Study: Conference Centre/Hotel/Spa (Grant Thornton Management Consultants & FHG International, 1999)

- This proposed facility includes approx. 25,000 sq. ft. conference facility; 150 room hotel; and day spa offering message and esthetic services.
- It is recommended for harbour lands in close proximity to the downtown.
- A site of 10-15 acres is required for the facility.

Business Attraction Plan (WCM Consulting, 2000)

- Strengths include: regional commercial centre for Grey/Bruce; strong potential for growth of tourism sector and telecommunications/technology sector (i.e., call centres); quality of life; competitive costs.
- Weaknesses include: distance to large market areas limits ability for just-in-time industrial suppliers.
- Opportunities include: serve niche markets within key industrial sectors (i.e., food processing, transportation equipment, telecommunications, tourism); promote small business development driven by lifestyle decisions of investor.

Community Improvement Plan (Downtown and Harbour Area) (City of Owen Sound, 2001)

- Provides a planning framework for the City to encourage development in the downtown and harbour areas.
- Specifically, programs have been created to encourage: structural and façade improvements in the downtown; development of vacant downtown lots and redevelopment of contaminated harbour lands; residential development in the downtown and harbour areas.



- These programs and policies are consistent with the recommendations of *the Owen Sound Harbour & Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy*.

Owen Sound Harbour & Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy (Hough Woodland Naylor Dance Leinster et al, 2001)

- The strategy concludes that the downtown is large and diverse which reflects its historic evolution and the scale of the regional market.
- No obvious gaps exist in the retail mix; however, there are opportunities to improve the retail mix particularly in the area of specialty retail.
- Improvements to the visual and functional characteristics of the downtown/harbour and intensifying public events and programming are recommended.
- Tourism and visitor market potential presents an important opportunity for the downtown and harbour area.
- Office and service commercial components of the downtown and harbour area are a major strength of the downtown and can be expanded.
- Five planning strategies are recommended:
 - *To strengthen the image and identity of Owen Sound's Harbour and Downtown.* This will include strengthening the traditional character of the area, preservation of historic assets and a focus on water based aesthetics and activities. It also includes façade improvement to individual properties, upgrading storefront signage, and directional signage.
 - *To consolidate the retail functions and resist fragmentation.* The major retail precinct along 2nd Avenue East south of 10th Street needs to be given priority. The retail strength of the downtown flows from this street. It should be given priority in terms of visual upgrading, tenancing and the deployment of resources.
 - *To enable more intensive programming of the harbour and downtown.* The streets, open spaces, and water's edge should become a venue for a sustained program of public activity, special events, festivals, and happenings throughout the year. This capability should be explicitly embedded into the physical design of the street improvements particularly along 1st Avenue East, 2nd Avenue East, 8th Street, and 9th Street.
 - *To create integrating linkages and connections*
 - *To accommodate future large scale development.* The port industrial lands are in transition and it is expected that most, if not all, of the land on the east side will be available for non-industrial use. This represents a very important strategic opportunity for Owen Sound. This area can accommodate larger scale development requiring larger blocks of land for buildings and parking. There are four strategic considerations for the long-term development of the east side harbour. First, the municipality needs to take a proactive approach to preparing these lands for future development. Second, the image and locational assets should be marketed. Third, the city must be proactive in developing incentives and encouraging office development and large scale residential within the harbour/downtown area, and over the long-term monitor policies that allow for



intensive developments in other parts of the City. Fourth, major new retail development in the harbour area should be resisted except as infill and linkage between major projects and the main retail precinct south of 10th Street. The emphasis should not be on developing major new office commercial projects which would be large and out of scale to the existing commercial fabric. Smaller infill projects may be possible on 3rd and 4th Avenues and these could be office or residential.

Commercial Needs Study (The Climans Group, 2002)

- The study found that a sufficient supply of commercial land/space exists to accommodate future demand to 2021.
- Maintaining flexibility to accommodate adjustments to the range, mix and location of retail and service/office space is recommended. Outside of the four commercial nodes, the City should support the redesignation of commercial properties for other appropriate uses. Designation of property for neighbourhood level commercial use may also be appropriate.
- The four (4) existing commercial nodes should continue to be recognized and supported by the City as the focus for commercial development.
- Each area can thrive as it develops its own unique range and mix of commercial activities:
 - *Downtown*. Maintain the Downtown First policy; primary source of service/office commercial space and small format, high-end retail outlets; promote residential intensification while maintaining the commercial streetscape of the Downtown; consider reuse of certain lands in the harbour area for residential use; address parking needs.
 - *Heritage Place Mall*. To be maintained as the principal enclosed regional mall.
 - *East City Commercial Area*. Adjacent to Heritage Place Mall, this area is absorbing most of the recent commercial growth, primarily of large format stores.
 - *West City Commercial Area*. An area that straddles the municipal boundary and offers a range of retail goods; further growth should be restricted so as not to rival the Downtown or East City.
- The study concluded that the City's Official Plan policies for these four nodes continue to offer a progressive approach to commercial land use planning.
- It is recommended that the City must be aggressive in directing the future development of commercial space in the City and exert influence on the decision-making of neighbouring municipalities.
- It is recommended that the new Official Plan include policies that seek to preserve the balance that has been achieved between commercial districts, with an evaluation of suitable downtown sites recommended prior to establishing new fringe commercial areas.
- New policies also are recommended to make proponents for the designation of new commercial lands responsible for demonstrating, at their expense, that the current supply of commercial lands are inadequate or not appropriate for future commercial development.



9.2 TRENDS AND ISSUES

A substantial amount of economic analysis is found in the studies outlined above and has not been reproduced here. In addition, the land use section of this report highlights the key issues for commercial and industrial development.

9.3 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Owen Sound has several strengths that can be built upon:

- Quality of life: a beautiful natural setting; safe, family oriented community; affordable housing; quality community and social services and facilities; and, cultural heritage.
- Regional Commercial Centre: serving a population of 35,000 in and around Owen Sound; the regional centre for most of Grey and Bruce Counties with a market of 150,000 permanent residents plus a seasonal influx of cottagers and tourists; offers key commercial areas including an attractive and vibrant downtown.
- Regional Government Centre: Owen Sound is the regional or district office location for provincial and federal government services as well as the Grey County administrative centre and also houses the region's major medical, social service and educational institutions.
- Tourism Assets: Niagara Escarpment; Bruce Trail; prime location on Georgian Bay; part of a South Georgian Bay tourist area; Owen Sound Bay and harbour; cultural and heritage sites and facilities; and local festivals and events.
- Corporate Leadership: Owen Sound has a stable base of industrial and commercial businesses.
- Competitive Costs: capital (i.e., land and construction) and operating (i.e., labour, utilities and taxes) are competitive within the regions and province.
- Harbour and commercial shipping provides a viable transportation alternative to truck transportation in light of lost rail service.

The challenges of the new Official Plan will be to develop land use policies that will enhance these strengths and encourage desirable development.

Other challenges to be addressed are:

Older Industrial Lands

Like many waterfront communities, Owen Sound must address the changing nature of its harbour. Industrial uses have declined and several sites require the decommissioning of contaminated soils. This challenge is balanced by the opportunity that the harbour represents. As has been suggested by a number of study teams, these harbour lands can be effectively reused for residential and tourism-related commercial uses.



Commercial Development at the Periphery

Again as noted by several study teams, Owen Sound has done an effective job of planning for commercial development and concentrating growth in the Downtown and three other commercial nodes. Of concern, is the continued growth of commercial uses immediately outside of the City boundary.

Regional Tourism Development

Owen Sound must continue its efforts to orchestrate and work in partnership with others in the development of the regional tourism market. Some of the key destination-quality facilities proposed for the area (i.e., the Escarpment Centre Ontario) are outside of the City boundary. Owen Sound must effectively link new developments to its downtown and other commercial areas, its harbour area and to other tourism facilities and services. Developing a new relationship with Grey County and the development of partnerships in product development and marketing are also an important component of regional tourism development.

Economic Diversity

Owen Sound is a regional centre with a diverse base of employment. There is a range of small and large businesses, industrial and commercial, as well as government at various levels. The strength of the economy is, in the long run, dependent upon maintaining this diversity, so that in an event of change or loss in one sector, there are others capable of maintaining the base. An opportunity for the Official Plan will be to ensure that land-use development provides for the maintenance of this diverse economic base.

Home Based Business

Home-based business is a growing segment of the economy. Home-based businesses have always existed in communities. When controversy occurs in the neighbourhood, it is usually with activities considered inappropriate to residential areas such as excessive traffic/parking demands, noise and on-site storage. For the business community, concerns tend to relate to fair tax treatment/fairness and impacts on traditional retail areas (i.e., the downtown).

Other issues that should be noted are that:

- Home-based business tends to operate unnoticed by neighbours and local officials.
- The home-based business can be the incubator for a larger business in the future.
- With the increasing use of telecommunications technology, professional services can easily be operated from a home.
- Home-based business is an increasingly important part of the economy.
- Home based businesses are as common in rural settings as they are in urban neighbourhoods.

Harbour development

Businesses continue to depend on the harbour as a major transportation link. The City must continue to work with these businesses to maintain economic stability and to ensure cooperation



with Transport Canada to protect the long term viability. Current Official Plan policies that maintain the commercial/industrial as well as recreational use of the harbour should be reviewed and updated to ensure the city's interest in the harbour is maintained.



TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



10 RECREATION

10.1 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

The policy context to analyse recreation related land use planning issues includes a number of topics, including parks and trails. The Official Plan for Owen Sound contains a number of policies pertaining to recreation, parks and trails, and several studies at the local and regional levels have also been completed.

Owen Sound Official Plan

The Official Plan sets out the objective of developing “a park system that will be conducive to the achievement of recreational and leisure time goals with appropriate consideration given to function and appearance and the impact of such uses on the urban environment, flexible enough to meet the changing needs of all age groups through time, and developed and located in such a way so as to foster encouragement for participation by all citizens of the City of Owen Sound and tourists.” It also encourages the development of privately owned and/or operated recreational facilities and undertakes to develop standards that will provide direction for the provision of recreational space, both public and private sectors (Section 1.5.3 (vi)). The policy of the City to provide services and facilities such as libraries, art galleries, museums, community centres, arenas and other sports and recreational facilities is set out in Section 4.5.1.7 of the Plan.

In section 4.8, the current Official Plan defines the open space system as “all publicly and privately owned parks, recreational lands and facilities, resource preserves, cemeteries, and the like which contribute to the provision of leisure time services for public recreation and enjoyment.” This includes publicly accessible parks, school and college lands, conservation lands, Crown lands and lands owned privately or leased for uses such as golf courses, lawn bowling clubs, curling clubs, marinas and tennis clubs.

The Official Plan encourages the preparation and adoption of a Park System Plan as an amendment to the Official Plan. It is to develop goals and standards for recreation facilities, identify recreation needs, inventory existing facilities and recommend improvements to these facilities. Standards for the amount of open space to be provided are set out in the Plan. Active recreation park space is required at a rate of 0.5ha per 1000 pop. for local facilities such as playgrounds, and 1.0ha per 1000 pop. for community parks with more extensive activities. Passive use open space is required at the community level at a rate of 0.5ha per 1000 pop. The Plan also requires 6.0ha of parkland at the city and regional level.

The Official Plan also provides for a parkland dedication of up to 2% of the land proposed for industrial or commercial subdivision and 5% of the land proposed for residential subdivision. Cash in lieu option is also offered. The City may also require on-site recreation facilities to be provided within large multiple unit residential developments.



Pedestrian links and bicycle trails are addressed in section 5.5 of the Transportation policies. The plan encourages the provision of such trails, including marked bicycle lanes, on road allowances, parklands and other rights of way to connect residential areas to open spaces, schools and to other areas.

Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan

In 1989 the City commissioned the preparation of a comprehensive master plan for the provision of recreation programs, facilities, parks and open space for the ensuing 20 years. The Master Plan was completed in 1991 following considerable public consultation. It contains 93 recommendations respecting Recreation Services Delivery System, Recreation Programs, Recreation Facilities and Municipal Parks and Open Space. Of these, Recreation Facilities and Parks and Open Space are most relevant to the Official Plan.

This Master Plan was never adopted by City Council. It therefore has an uncertain role as City policy. It is now almost 12 years old and needs to be assessed and supplemented to prepare for the next years. Many of its proposals have been implemented or have influenced the delivery of recreational services to this community. However, several of its proposals have not yet been reflected in the Official Plan. Also, many conditions have changed over the life of the plan.

The scope of this report cannot include the necessary review of the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, however, many issues can be identified which give direction to the review.

Trails Master Map

In 1997 Northwood Associates, Landscape Architects, produced a Trails Master Plan for the City. This Plan consists of a map showing existing and proposed trail routes within the city for the Bruce Trail, walking trails, bicycle routes and snowmobile trails (See **Map 7 Park Trails Master Plan**). It does not differentiate between existing and proposed trails. City Council adopted the map as City policy, but as such, it does not form any part of the Park System Plan contemplated by the Official Plan.

Bruce-Grey Trails Network

The Bruce-Grey Trails Network is a group formed to coordinate the development of a comprehensive trails network for Bruce and Grey Counties. Recently, CP provided abandoned rail lines from Orangeville to Owen Sound to the Trans Canada Trail Foundation in 1999. Arrangements are presently being made to transfer the line from Dundalk to Owen Sound to Grey County. A similar situation regarding the CN lines in Bruce County resulted in the purchase of these routes in 2000 by Bruce County.

The Network produced a Bruce-Grey Trails Network Master Plan in 2000 after an extensive public consultation process. The City of Owen Sound was represented on the steering Committee of the study. The Plan mapped existing trails, studied the CP rail route in some detail as an example, and proposed possible routes to fill in gaps to create a trail system for a variety of



users stretching from the south end of Bruce County to Tobermory and from Dundalk to Lake Huron.

The proposed trail system will bring a multi-use trail into Owen Sound from Dundalk to link into City trails via the CP rail corridor. A multi-use link is also proposed from the existing Georgian Trail at Meaford on a route yet to be determined. To the west of the City, the multi-use corridor would link up with the existing Sarawak Rail Trail, the South Bruce Peninsula Rail Trail and the Saugeen Rail Trail in Southampton. There is a link through the Owen Sound Harbour area that would presently not permit snowmobiles to connect from the east trail to the west. Snowmobiles would presently have to skirt the city at the south end of Harrison Park through existing snowmobile trails.

The City's Strategic Plan

There are nine Recreational Strategic Initiatives proposed in the recently completed *Strategic Plan for the Corporation of the City of Owen Sound*. The present Official Plan does not deal with most of the issues presented in these strategic initiatives,

1. The City should give a high priority to the implementation of the City Trails Master Plan and support the Counties of Grey and Bruce and other partners in the development of a competitive regional trail network.
2. The City should recognize the demographic changes in the community and respond to the needs of an aging population. In particular, it is proposed that an improved facility for seniors be provided, including both a drop-in centre and access to exercise facilities.
3. The City should increase the recreational potential of the downtown and the harbourfront. This implies public spaces for events and activities.
4. The City should provide a range of recreation opportunities for youth in the community and promote the concept of fitness for all ages.
5. The City should identify partners and stakeholders for the development of a multi-purpose recreation centre including aquatic facilities to meet existing and future demand. In accordance with the following initiative, the proposed recreation centre should serve regional needs.
6. The City should develop itself as a regional centre for recreation opportunities.
7. The City should maximize the potential of City green space and parkland environment. This initiative includes developing a Parks Master Plan within the framework of the Official Plan.
8. The City should encourage and develop recreational activities for youth to include persons up to 25.
9. The City should nurture and support volunteers.



Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan

The Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan was described in the Urban Design section of this study. Completed in 2001, the Plan identifies a number of recreation and park issues in the downtown and harbour areas.

The Plan recommends (pp.92-96):

- Develop a system of pedestrian and bicycle routes throughout the downtown, linking key attractions and connecting to the larger regional trail system.
- Extend separated pedestrian and bicycle trails through the parkland along the harbour edge, and along the 1st Avenue West corridor. Connections to local neighbourhoods are necessary.
- Close 1st Avenue East from 11th Street to 10th Street, and develop an urban waterfront park along the inner harbour edge. Redevelop building facades and interface with buildings facing the harbour and new park site.
- Design and implement pedestrian and bicycle routes on the harbour side of the inner harbour. These trails can evolve and improve over time, but must link the inner harbour to the Lumley Bayshore Community Centre and other regional trails. A green parkway corridor is proposed along the harbour breakwalls, linking to the north.
- Establish a park reserve at the northern end of the East Harbour Precinct to accommodate event space and recreational uses for the community.
- Extend the West Parkway to the north to link with Kelso Beach and the Pottawatomi River system.

Kiwanis Soccer Complex

A major addition to the City's recreation facilities has been the development of the Kiwanis Soccer Complex on 9th Avenue East north of 28th Street East. The 16 ha site will provide 11 soccer fields with a club house and parking. By the year 2000 the Minor Soccer Association had raised over \$200,000 for its construction. The Club House was completed in 2002-2003 and almost all of the programs have shifted to the complex.

Harrison Park Master Plan Study

The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan called for a Physical Development Master Plan to be undertaken for Harrison Park. A physical Master Plan has been completed for the Park. Although it is dealing primarily with upgrading facilities, it should respond to issues such as future trail integration and signage systems. For example, the Park Trails Master Map illustrates a trail connection from the Y Fitness Trail to Parkview Estates. The development of this trail connection should be considered in the present Master Plan Study. The plan also raises the issue of designating the park and adjacent areas to the Mill Dam as an area of natural heritage significance.



10.2 TRENDS AND ISSUES

10.2.1 Recreation

Team Sports

The most popular team sport over the last 12 years has been soccer. It has grown from 740 youth in 1990 to 1400 in 2002. An aggressive program of community fundraising has kept the development of facilities in pace with the growth.

Minor baseball has varied drastically in participation numbers. It has ranged between a high in 1994 of 980 and a low in 2000 of 265, (minor softball – from 450 to 330). Adult softball continues to flourish at the recreational and competitive level. There is a good supply of baseball diamonds throughout Owen Sound parks.

Minor hockey has remained fairly consistent with participation ranging from 550 to 670. This may be circumscribed by limited playing time with only two arenas in Owen Sound. Ringette, which also uses the arena, has been stable at around 100 participants. There has also been growth in the girls hockey league. The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan suggests maintaining the two arenas, Bayshore and the Coliseum, for hockey and ringette. With figure skating, these facilities are used to capacity and teams have to find ice time in surrounding communities.

Lacrosse has grown from 90 youth in 1990 to 460 in 2002. There are adult and competitive lacrosse opportunities in the city.

Curling is provided by the Grey Granite Club and the Bluewater Curling Club, both private clubs. Lawn bowling is provided at a single private club on the city's west side. There has been some interest in a public facility.

Other Sports

The improvement of indoor pool facilities has been an issue for a long time. The Family Y has the only publicly accessible pool. The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan recommends expanding the Y facility to create a larger indoor swimming pool to meet the aquatic needs of the community. Little has yet been achieved in this respect, but the City, Georgian Bluffs and Meaford are all working with the Y and surrounding communities to try to develop a new multi-purpose recreation centre including aquatic facilities to meet existing and future demand for the whole area. This is a priority in the City's Strategic Plan.

Racquetball and squash courts are not provided in this community. The Bayshore Racquetball Club has not been replaced. The demand for these facilities is not known. Another particular area of need is the provision of seniors' recreation facilities. This is one of the elements being considered in a multi-purpose recreation centre.



Culture and Arts

The line between recreation and cultural activities is blurred and difficult to define. In terms of programming, it is common and appropriate to treat them as the same. The role of the City versus private provision of these facilities and services is similarly mixed. What is missing is a recognition of the role and objectives of cultural and arts activities in the Official Plan. The Plan does mention the policy of the City to provide public services and facilities as appropriate for such things as libraries, art galleries, museums, theatres and community centres. This issue is also associated with Cultural Heritage and is addressed in that section of this report.

10.2.2 Parks and Open Space

Neighbourhood parks are defined as serving a population of 2,000 – 3,000 with the same level of provision of 0.5ha per 1,000. The service area radius is proposed at 0.4ha rather than 0.5ha. Either of these standards would be a good objective but would not be met in many existing areas of the city. The city is divided into 9 neighbourhoods roughly paralleling the existing system with the addition of the East Harbour.

Community Parks are proposed to serve a population of 4,000 – 10,000 with the same level of provision of 1.5ha per 1,000. The city is divided into four quadrants with populations varying from 3,500 to 6,000. The Plan proposes a service radius of 1.5 to 2.5km versus 3.0km in the present system. This is achievable.

City parks are defined as providing unique, specialized recreational activities oriented to participation by all City residents. They are proposed to be provided at 1.5ha per 1,000. The existing standard of 6ha is considerably less than the 33ha that would be needed at this standard. As Harrison Park alone is 33ha, this standard has already been met.

The Plan also recommends a category of Parks and Open Space Linkage, elements that provide connection between various components of the parks and open space system. These are linear parks and trails, possibly wildlife corridors or riverbanks. This concept fits well with a trail system. There are no provision requirements.

The last category is Regional Parks, provided by the Province, County or Conservation authority. West Rocks is within this category.

The actual provision of parks and open space in the city is shown on **Map 8, Parks, Open Space and Neighbourhoods**. This chart shows City, Conservation Authority and School Board properties that contribute to the open space/park system.

It contains several additions from the Official Plan listing. New neighbourhood parks are Beattie Street, J. Irvine Brown Children's playground and Timber McArthur Park. Newwash, adjacent to Kelso Beach, the new OSCVI and Stoney Orchard in the East Bluffs neighbourhood might be



considered community parks while the Getaway Skateboard Park, the Harbour Soccer Field and the Kiwanis Soccer Complex are more specialized city parks. The inner Harbour park is a linkage park. The Harrison Park extension was originally categorized as a community park and then as a regional park. The opening of the new OSCVI left the former site as an open space with an uncertain role and future.

In 5 neighbourhoods (2,3,5,6 and 7) there is a shortage of neighbourhood park space, but no area is outside of a 0.5km distance from a playground. The northwest and southeast quadrants of the city are short on community park space while the other two have more than twice their requirement. The presence of Harrison Park and Kelso Park help to mitigate this shortfall. A full review of all these properties is needed as part of the review of the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan.

Recent policy, in absence of a comprehensive plan, identifies the Bayshore, Harrison Park and Kelso beach as full service parks where accessible playground equipment should be located and a full range of recreation and cultural opportunities encouraged.

10.2.3 Trails

The development of trails to fulfill recreational and fitness needs is an expanding phenomenon. It is both a tourism and recreation issue. The Owen Sound area is already a location of choice for hiking trails, cycling and snowmobiling. The closing of railway lines has provided opportunities to develop new regional trail systems. The Bruce-Grey Trail Network has provided an overall planning context for the development of a trail network. They have also reported on the significant economic impact of trail development.

The Trails Master Plan for Owen Sound identifies a system of trails within the city with linkages to existing trail systems. The Plan, however, is a map of intended routes without a strategy to achieve it, standards for its development and signage or details of its location. It also needs to be updated to include proposed multi-use trails on railway rights-of-way. A full Trails Master Plan still needs to be developed.

Snowmobile access into the city is controlled by a 1976 by-law that prohibits the use of snowmobiles on certain main streets and downtown and after midnight. Since then the city has been extended and ATVs have quickly grown in popularity. The multi-use trails could bring more snowmobile and ATV use to the city. A comprehensive policy is needed to define how snowmobiles and ATVs can safely reach the necessary destinations in the city.

10.3 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan

Recreational needs are constantly changing as one activity becomes more popular and another wanes. Some of these trends can be predicted through demographic information, but other



influences such as the changing role of schools in sports, popularity of certain activities and availability of facilities are more difficult to predict over the longer term. It is therefore important to update information on demand and supply for various recreational activities every five years and to adjust the strategy of facility use and development regularly.

The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan not only needs to be reviewed and updated, but also needs to be adopted by Council as policy. The present Official Plan states that it should be adopted as an amendment to the Official Plan. While certain aspects of the Plan might require amendments to the Official Plan, the detail of the provision of recreation services and facilities might be better dealt with as adopted policy of Council under the direction, goals and objectives of the Official Plan. This makes the regular review and amendment of the Recreation Plan a simpler process.

Regional Cooperation

There is a good deal of cross-use of recreational facilities between the City of Owen Sound and the surrounding communities. For example, Owen Sound residents account for about 65% of the participants in minor sports programs. At the same time, groups in Owen Sound booked approximately 550 hours of ice time in various facilities outside of the City. Partnership with surrounding communities is clearly in everyone's interest. This regional context should be addressed in the review of the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan. The greatest efficiency of resources is achieved when all regional facilities are used to the best advantage. The City is in the position to provide leadership in coordinated planning, particularly regarding the provision of indoor swimming and ice rink facilities. For more specialized needs, the City should develop itself as a regional centre for recreational opportunities, as suggested in the Draft Strategic Plan.

Parks Classification

The Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan proposes a new park classification and standards of provision that should be adopted in the Official Plan. This classification does not distinguish active and passive uses. As this is not always easy to categorize, it may be more appropriate to have targets for the provision of specific functions such as children's playgrounds, ball diamonds and sports fields rather than an active/passive classification. The city should continue to develop its specific policy related to this issue, with three main parks (Kelso, Harrison, Bayshore) providing the broadest range of services including accessibility features.

Trails Planning

An Official Plan objective should be to develop citywide trail systems for pedestrians and cyclists, providing safe and convenient connections between neighbourhoods and significant city locations. These should be linked to regional trail systems. A Trails Master Plan should be prepared and adopted, possibly within the Recreation Master Plan, to guide the development of trails within the city. This should also address a snowmobile access policy to provide appropriate connections from regional snowmobile trails and safe access to necessary destinations within the city.



The Official Plan must continue to support the retention of public access to the waterfront through trails in front of major private developments along the shoreline.

Future Development Areas

The development of the harbour area is a critical issue respecting future park development. The City wishes to attract appropriate development to this area while retaining public access to the water's edge. The water's edge is also conceptually the route of a trail connection from downtown to the future rail trail and to Hibou Conservation Area. There are issues of shoreline naturalization and protection that should be considered along this route as well as the needs of potential future residents. There is an emerging emphasis on maintaining public access along the shore that must be encouraged.

The City would be wise to study the potential development options for these lands and to develop a concept plan for park and trail development along the entire East Harbour/Bayshore. This would provide a firm basis for negotiating the sale of these lands for development. The City's expectations would be clear while leaving appropriate flexibility for development. This should be done together with an urban design study to set out objectives and parameters for the form of development that could be suitable.

The City needs to establish park and trail requirements for new development areas such as the Sydenham annex lands as part of the development of a new secondary plan. Park design standards for neighbourhood, community, city and linkage parks should be established prior to determining which lands should be set aside for these uses. Guidelines should be established for parkland dedication through the subdivision process. This should include the provision of parks, linkage open spaces and trails, as well as the development of a park site plan.



TEAM OWEN SOUND

*The Biglieri Group Ltd
R.E. Millward & Associates, Bluewater Design and Development, Clara Consulting,
Mark Engineering, Will Dunning Inc, Gamsby & Mannerow, SAAR Environmental*



11 TRANSPORTATION

The transportation system for a city has a major effect on the vitality of the city. If people cannot travel around, they cannot get to work, shopping, recreation and medical services, and they cannot thrive. If businesses cannot get enough workers and raw materials or cannot ship their products, they cannot thrive. Most utilities rely on road rights-of-way to be able to distribute their services: without them, a city cannot thrive. Therefore, a healthy transportation system should result in a healthy community.

11.1 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

Owen Sound Official Plan

Section 5 Transportation Policies in the existing Official Plan concisely outlines the policies regarding transportation issues in Owen Sound. Policies include are developed for the road system, the railway system, shipping and boating facilities, public transit, pedestrian links, bicycle trails, street parking and air transportation.

The policies appear to have served the City well for the most part. However, changes have occurred to the transportation system that were not anticipated when the Official Plan was adopted and have not been incorporated into the Plan by amendments.

The major change to the transportation system has been the deletion of rail service to the City. This has had both benefits and costs. The loss of the rail service has forced shippers to use other methods (mostly trucks) to move their goods. However, there are offsetting benefits. The railway rights-of way have become available for other uses, such as bicycle and pedestrian trails. Another benefit is that train movements no longer block traffic on the roads in and around the City. Since there are no longer any railways in Owen Sound, the railway policies in the Official Plan are no longer required.

Owen Sound Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan for Owen Sound highlights five important transportation strategies:

- The City should operate an efficient and effective transit service serving Owen Sound
- The City should provide a specialized transit service for people throughout the week with mobility problems to provide equitable access for persons with disabilities.
- The City should ensure the provision of adequate parking facilities to serve the downtown area.
- The City should recognize and promote the Billy Bishop Regional Airport as a valuable regional asset.
- The City should develop an updated Transportation Plan for the City, which makes provision for project east-west traffic movements.

In addition, Economic Development Strategic Initiative #9 states, “The City should pursue divestiture of the Owen Sound Harbour once the Federal Government has improved the



condition of the harbour walls, dredged to an appropriate depth and confirm appropriate revenue opportunities to cover operating and maintenance costs.”

Some of these actions, specifically related to parking and the harbour, have been further defined by the Owen Sound Harbour & Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy.

Owen Sound Harbour & Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy

The report made a number of recommendations for the harbour. These include:

Marine uses (High to Medium Priority)

- Develop places in the inner harbour for visiting boats, water taxis and temporary craft moorage near the downtown.
- Develop an extension of Fisherman’s Walk as a floating wharf along the west side of the inner harbour.
- Develop a floating pontoon bridge just north of 10th Street, to be used as a pedestrian crossing during events, and to be used as a fishing /docking wharf during other periods of the year.
- Work with partner agencies to scope a terms of reference for detail study of the harbour area and the feasibility of transient moorage facilities. The study should determine the size and scale of the development, seasonal operation, implementation budgets and any site remediation requirements.

Moorage for cruise ships and a permanent large vessel (Medium Priority)

- Negotiate use/ownership of the east breakwall to provide permanent/temporary moorage for visiting cruise ships or other large vessels. The City should continue to discuss the waterfront plans with the federal government to look at short and long term moorage requirements and flexibility for city initiatives.

Provision of Temporary and Transient Moorage along the West Dockwall (High to Medium Priority)

- Conduct a design feasibility study to establish a transient marine facility near the Museum site, inclusive of supporting facilities. Work with partner agencies to scope a terms of reference for detail study of the harbour and the feasibility of transient moorage facilities. The study should determine the size and scale of the development, seasonal operation, implementation budgets and any site remediation requirements. East and West Harbour proposals can be coordinated as one study.



11.2 TRENDS AND ISSUES

The transportation system is made up of the following general components:

Parking: Parking is an important part of the transportation system, since without it, vehicles would have to keep moving. Parking can be categorized a number of ways. One categorization is: a) public on-street parking, b) public off-street parking and c) private parking. These categories can be further divided into free or paid parking. In all cases, it is essential that a sufficient supply of parking space be provided at a reasonable cost and reasonably close to people's destinations.

Transit: Transit generally includes public transit and taxis. They rely on the road system to move people from one place to another. Regular transit is the key transportation mode for those who do not have access to a private vehicle. Accessible transit is equally, if not more important to those who do not have access to a private vehicle and who have mobility problems. Taxis are an important mode for those who do not have access to a private vehicle or who choose not to drive, but wish to be driven.

Port: Ports are key transshipment points. Goods are transferred to and from ships and the road system. There may be facilities for temporary storage of materials at ports. In the past, ports have been major employment centres, especially when they contain shipyards. Ports have also played an important role in long distance travel in the past, when ships were a convenient means of travelling long distances at reasonable costs.

Airport: Airports now provide many of the functions that ports provided in the past. They are major transshipment points for goods and for people who want to travel long distances at reasonable costs and reasonable speeds.

11.2.1 Roads

Roads form the backbone of the transportation system. They permit people and goods to move from one area to another. Private vehicles are the largest users of the roadways. However, trucks and transit are also key components of the transportation system that rely on a good road system. The road rights-of-way also permit pedestrians to walk safely from one place to another. The rights-of-way also permit services to be provided to the adjacent lands. Designated bicycle routes can assist bicyclists in moving around the City. The major underground services typically include water mains and storm and sanitary sewers, telephone and power lines, CATV cables, gas lines, etc. Major overhead services typically include telephone and power lines and CATV cables. Ideally, the road system provides safe and efficient movement of goods and people through and throughout the City.



Classification

The classification of a roadway is a function of the roles it provides. Generally roads are classified as follows:

Controlled Access Highways include freeways and expressways. Such highways are designed to carry high volumes of traffic at high speeds and levels of service as is practical. There are no such highways in Owen Sound.

Arterial Streets and Highways carry longer distance traffic between important activity or population centres.

Collector Roads link the local street system with arterials. They serve as local through roads for short trips **and** provide access for abutting land uses.

Local Roads: provide access to the road system for the abutting land uses. They have low speeds and low traffic volumes. They permit movement from abutting land uses to collector and arterial roads.

The current road classification is shown on **Map 9 Road System**. The characteristics of urban road classifications are provided in Appendix G.

It is possible to further divide the road classifications into major and minor categories. This should only be done if there is a significant difference in the requirements between the major and minor. Roads classifications can also be divided into residential and non-residential roads.

An overriding jurisdiction is the connecting link designation of the highway routes through the City. At the current time, connecting route designations exist for the provincial routes through the City. At the end of this year, a connecting route agreement between the County and the City will come into force. The current and future designations are shown in **Map 10 Connecting Transportation Links**. The new Official Plan must accommodate the county roads and resulting planning and maintenance implications of this new system.

Network

The road network is generally based on a system of grids. The grids south of 10th Street and west of 9th Avenue East run generally in a north-south direction, at an angle of about 7° west of north. North of 10th Street and west of 9th Avenue East, the grids parallel the harbour and are at an angle of 15° east of north.

One of the characteristics with the road network is the discontinuities imposed by land forms and physical features. The Sydenham River and Owen Sound Bay divide the City into two parts. Consequently, the number of east-west connections are limited. Fortunately, there are four river



crossings in the downtown area. Unfortunately, there are no other crossings outside of the downtown area. It has long been thought that it would be desirable to provide additional crossings of the harbour and river system. One would cross the harbour north of 10th Street and another south of the 2nd Avenue East crossing. Both crossings will face major environmental and cost implications. A full study of the feasibility, economics and environmental impacts will be required to justify any new crossing.

The other problem with the road network is the local discontinuities in the system, as shown on **Map 11 Missing Transportation Links**. In some cases, road sections have been closed and may not be available for the development of new road sections. Some are adjacent to hazardous and undeveloped lands and are surplus to the road system. In most of the cases, there are road allowances that are existing but have not been opened. The provision of roadways in these rights-of-way will come when the adjacent lands develop, or they may remain unopened.

The City should undertake a detailed review of these “missing” road links to determine if there are advantages to opening them to use. In some cases, it may be advantageous to open a right-of-way for pedestrian and/or bicycle use only, particularly if the opening would expand the current bicycle and/or walking route systems. Some surplus road allowances could be closed and sold for development. In the Brooke quadrant of the City north of 14th Street West and west of 2nd Avenue West unopened road allowances have been subject to native land claims.

Street Design

Arterial roads should generally follow a grid pattern, with as few deviations as possible. Similarly, collector roads should also follow a grid pattern wherever possible. There are two thoughts on the design of local street systems. The prevalent system for the last 50 years has been to design subdivision road patterns as a system of crescents, P-loops and cul-de-sacs. This type of pattern limits the amount of non-local traffic on the local roads. It can, however, lead to longer walking distances unless pathways are provided at the appropriate locations. Previously, the grid system was used for local streets. This pattern is now being up-dated and promoted by some as “neo-traditional” road design. This is the overall road pattern that traditionally been developed in Owen Sound.

In any case, all new streets should be designed to provide satisfactory road gradients, facilitate the provision of safe vehicle movement, facilitate the provision of underground and aboveground municipal services, provide proper access to adjacent lands, accommodate emergency and maintenance and transit vehicle access, accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access, provide safe street intersections and new streets should discourage the creation of double fronting lots except adjacent to arterial streets where sound planning principles suggest that access to arterial streets should be restricted, and the like.

Rights-of-Way

The road right-of-way provides room for more than just vehicle and pedestrian movement. As described above, it also provides a corridor for above ground and underground services. The



right-of-way for a particular road should be wide enough to contain all of the services without creating conflicts between the services. It should also be wide enough so that the travelled service can be widened, if necessary, without requiring the purchase of additional property.

The current minimum right-of-way widths for the road classifications are:

<u>Classification</u>	<u>Minimum Right-Of-Way Width</u>
Arterial Roads	25 metres
Collector Roads	20 metres
Local Roads	20 metres
Minor Local Roads	15 metres

The width of a right-of-way can be determined by adding the widths of the boulevards to the widths of the number of lanes to be accommodated. In the case of a local road, the typical roadway has a width of 8.50 metres and there are two 5.75 metre boulevards (measured from the edge of pavement to the right-of-way limit). For a four lane collector, the width would be comprised of four 3.50 metre lanes plus two 6.00 metre boulevards to produce a total width of 26 metres. The slightly wider boulevards permit slightly wider sidewalks than would be normally be installed on a local road.

While the existing Official Plan states that Council may reduce the right-of-way width for local roads from 20 meters to 15 meters, Council has been reluctant to do so. There are numerous examples of reduced rights-of-way in use in Ontario. In many places, an 18 meter width has been used for minor local roads. In some situation where roads are single loaded, roads with as small as 15 meters have been used. The controlling features are the minimum horizontal separations between the different underground utilities. The City and the associated utilities should review local road standards to determine if reduced rights-of-way are appropriate for Owen Sound.



Using these principles, one determination of right-of-way widths is shown in the following table:

**Table 19
Typical Right-Of-Way Widths**

Classification		Lanes			Roadway Width Metres	Sidewalks Number	Sidewalk Width Metres	Boulevard Width Metres	ROW Width Metres
		Through Number	Left Turn Number	Parking Number					
Arterial Road	UAU	4	1	0	19	2	1.5	8.50	36
	UAU	4	0	0	14	2	1.5	8.00	30
Collector	UCU	4	0	0	14	2	1.5	6.00	26
	UCU	2	0	2	13	2	1.5	6.00	25
	UCU	2	0	1	10	2	1.5	5.00	20
Local	ULU	2	0	0	8.5	1	1.4	5.75	20
Minor Local	ULU	2	0	0	7	1	1.4	4.00	15
Notes		(1)	(2)	(3)				(4)	
	(1)	Based on 3.5 metre lanes							
	(2)	Based on 5.0 metre back-to-back left turn lane							
	(3)	Based on 3.0 metre lanes							
	(4)	The total boulevard width for a minor local is 8.0 metres. This is generally split with							
		5.0 metres on the side with the sidewalk and 3.0 metres on the other.							

It should be noted that additional roadway width may be required to accommodate on-street bicycle lanes and/or additional boulevard width may be required to accommodate bicycle paths.

Intersections

Intersections are the locations where the greatest number of vehicle and pedestrian conflicts occur. Intersections should be relatively simple, have good sight lines, have few visual distractions and adequate traffic control measures. Where possible, existing jogs and off-set intersections should be eliminated and should be avoided in the future. Sight lines should be improved wherever possible.

The degree of traffic control at an intersection depends on the design of the intersection and the volumes and modes of traffic. At local road/local road intersection, traffic control may be limited to yield signs, stop signs on one approach in the case of a T-intersection or on opposite set of approaches for four-way intersections, or all-way stop signs if traffic volumes warrant. Many municipalities are experimenting with mini-traffic circles to control traffic movements at local road/local road intersections. Arterial road/collector road and arterial road/arterial road intersections are usually controlled by traffic signals. Additional lanes are usually required to provide storage for queues of turning vehicles, particularly for left turning vehicles.



Intersections should be spaced adequately to provide proper traffic flow. Generally, intersections should be at minimum 80 to 100 meters apart, but larger separation distances should be considered on heavier volume streets. The spacing of major signalized accesses and signalized intersections has an important effect on the quality and quantity of traffic flow.

There are currently 13 independent traffic control signals and 15 signals in five interconnected systems. Ideally, all of the signalized intersections and accesses should be interconnected to provide the best traffic operations possible. Interconnecting all of the signals provides a number of benefits beyond the day-to-day intersection operations. For instance, the central control of the entire system permits timely maintenance activities, particularly when a signal becomes non-operational suddenly. It also permits changes to signal timings to be made centrally, saving staffing time and costs. The City is moving towards a central traffic control system and should proceed as quickly as resources permit.

Many factors affect intersection spacing, such as existing development patterns, particularly in built-up areas. Deviations from the above criteria may be necessary to provide for appropriate development of adjacent lands.

Truck Routes

The City has adopted a set of all day and daytime-only truck routes through the City. These are shown on **Map 12 Truck Routes**. The truck routes generally follow the main routes throughout the city. The truck routes should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are appropriate and that they are operating satisfactorily. One of the issues that could be dealt with during the transportation study is a need for changing to truck routing systems and the possible need for a truck by-pass.

Bicycle Route

The City has a set of bicycle routes. There generally run on roadways, although there are some non-road paths through parks and the old railway right-of-way in the northwest section of the City. Every opportunity to expand the routes should be pursued. (See **Map 7, Park Trail Master Plan**.)

Walking Routes

The City has a set of designated walking routes and the Bruce Trail also passes through the western section of the City. Like the bicycle routes, there is a combination of on-street routes and off-street routes. It may be advantageous to open some of the unopened rights-of-way for pedestrian and bicycle use only so that the routes can be expanded. As with bicycle routes, every opportunity should be pursued to expand the walking routes.

Snowmobile Trails

There is also a system of snowmobile trails that are off-road for the most part throughout the city. (See **Map 7**.) There is also a by-law which prohibits snowmobiles on certain arterial roads.



Access

Access is one of the key factors in a successful transportation system. Ideally, access to abutting land uses should be done through local and collector roads, with no access directly to arterial roads. However, there are situations where it is advantageous for both the City and the adjacent land owners to provide direct access to arterial roads.

On-Street Parking

On-street parking should generally be limited to collector and local roads. On-street parking on arterial roads should be limited, since parking and unparking manoeuvres can significantly effect the operations of arterial roads. In the downtown area, it is not possible to eliminate parking on all of the arterial roads, since businesses rely on the on-street parking for their customers use. To ensure that such parking is used by customers for only short times, the parking should be regulated in time or metered. The city operates a metered parking system downtown on arterial and collector roads. There are approximately 484 on-street parking spaces in the downtown area. Most of these spaces are metered for short term (1 hour) use; free parking is provided on 2nd Avenue East for two blocks but enforced at a one hour limit. There is some medium term parking west of the river.

On local and collector roads, parking may be limited to one side if there is insufficient roadway width for parking on both sides. It should be noted that on-street parking tends to slow down vehicles travelling along roads. That is, the parking becomes a traffic calming measure.

Off-Street Parking

Off-street parking should be provided wherever possible. In the downtown area, off-street parking lots may be privately or publicly owned. In the suburban areas, off-street parking is almost always privately owned. There are approximately 577 private parking spaces and approximately 940 public parking spaces in the downtown area. Off street parking is split into medium terms (4 hour) lots and long term (8 hour) lots.

In the case of redevelopments, there may be a need for a parking study to determine the extent of the parking required for the new use. Such studies typically survey the parking at similar sites to determine the appropriate parking ratios for the redeveloping site. If the redevelopment is a retail site, it is important that any study consider the parking usage on Saturdays and Sundays. In the downtown, overnight parking for winter residential use has become an emerging issue to encourage upper floor residential development. The harbour and downtown Master Plan recommends that where parking spaces are lost to re-development, the City consider alternative space locations.



Traffic Calming

Traffic calming is defined as “the combination of mainly physical measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behaviour and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. (Subcommittee on Traffic Calming, Institute of Transportation Engineers [ITE], 1997)

Traffic calming measures work best when there are planned as part of a new subdivision development. Retrofitting traffic calming measures in existing neighbourhood can be difficult. The Transport Association of Canada and ITE Canada have published a comprehensive report titled “Canadian Guide to Neighbourhood Traffic Calming”, December 1998 that covers all aspects of traffic calming.

Needs

A number of actions have been described in the above sections. They include the following:

- The City should develop a clear definition for road classification and undertake a review of the existing system to ensure that the classifications of the roadways match their functional characteristics.
- The City must adopt the new County Roads into it’s Official Plan and provide maintenance and planning policies for these roads.
- The City should undertake a detailed review of these “missing” road links to determine if there are advantages to opening them to use or disposing of them as surplus.
- The City should adopt a right-of-way width plan as part of the new Official Plan to insure that it can obtain the appropriate road widenings when lands develop and/or when roads have to be widened. There is a three step process to establish the plan. First, the City should review the current right-of-way width standards to ensure that future requirements for lanes and services can be incorporated in the standards. Once that is done, the City should review the right-of-way widths of the existing roads to determine the current widths. Thirdly, the City should determine if there will be a future need for further road widenings. Reduced road allowance widths should be considered where appropriate.
- The City and should proceed as quickly as resources permit towards the development of a centralized traffic control system.
- The City should adopt a policy or set of guidelines on access to all roads, and to arterial roads in particular, to ensure that the needs for good traffic operations are balanced by the access needs of adjacent land development.
- The truck routes should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are appropriate and that they are operating satisfactorily
- Every opportunity to expand bicycle routes should be pursued.
- As with bicycle routes, every opportunity should be pursued to expand the walking routes.
- The City should adopt a policy or set of guidelines for access to all roads, so that access to arterial roads can be minimized where desirable and permitted elsewhere under a set of well-know conditions.



Constraints

One of the major constraints to the further development of the road system is the river/bay/harbour system and the lands forms associated with the Niagara Escarpment. One of the perceived critical needs in the City is to provide additional east-west road capacity, not just for private vehicles, but also for transit, trucking, pedestrians and bicyclists.

An additional water crossing north of 10th Street are restricted shipping and land claims issues. Logical crossings in this area are also restricted by the character of the neighbourhoods leading to the harbour and the impact the additional traffic may create. South of the 2nd Avenue crossing of the Sydenham River, there are parks on both sides of the river that provide their own constraints to the development of an additional river crossing.

Determining the need for the crossings should be included in any overall transportation study undertaken by the City.

11.2.2 Transit

Public transit provides the primary travel alternative to the private automobile. To accommodate such a service, planning for new developments and built-up areas should include consideration of requirements for public transit. Such requirements would include allocations for bus bays or elimination of street parking for bus stops to reduce impact on traffic flow, streets planned and designed in such a way so as to accommodate transit vehicles, erection of bus shelters, and appropriate land use planning to encourage greater population densities along and in the vicinity of transit routes.

Network

The City of Owen Sound currently operates four fixed route and one dial-a-bus transit service within the City. There is also a special routing to the Owen Sound Collegiate Vocational Institute in the morning and afternoon at 8:00, 8:30 and 9:00 am and 3:00 and 3:30 pm. The network is shown on **Map 13 Transit Routes**.

The City also provides a door-to-door transportation service for residents of the City that require the use of a wheelchair or with other mobility limitations that restrict their ability to use the City's conventional public transit system. Residents who wish to use this service must complete an application form and meet the following eligibility criteria:

- the inability to board a conventional City bus and/or
- the inability to walk one City block or to the nearest bus stop to their home and/or
- insufficient endurance or stamina to ride a conventional bus for a reasonable length of time.

Service

The regular weekday transit service runs on a 30 minue headway from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm. The Saturday service runs from 9:00 am to 5:30 pm. on a 30 minute headway. All routes start from



the transit terminal on 3rd Avenue East north of 10th Street. A total of five buses are used to cover the routes and they are operated by Thomas Norris Limited.

The specialized transit service uses a wheelchair accessible bus and operates 5 days per week Monday to Wednesday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and Thursday to Friday 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Cost recovery

The cost recovery for the regular transit system for 2002 from the passenger fares and passes was \$182,572. There were a total of 148,500 passenger trips. The revenue per trip was approximately \$1.23.

Needs

The new Official Plan should encourage the retention and improvement of the public transit system to provide a viable alternative to use of the private automobile.

Constraints

The constraints for the transit system are similar to that for the road system: the river/bay/harbour system, land forms and road discontinuities. Added to these are the municipal boundaries. It would be possible to extend the transit service into the Township of Georgian Bluffs to the west, if an agreement could be reached between the two municipalities. Density of development and ridership limitations impact on the financial viability of the service.

11.2.3 Port

The Inner Harbour, unlike many Ontario waterfront communities, still maintains commercial shipping and recreational boating opportunities. Owen Sound continues to have a busy working harbour with shipping to the Great Lakes Elevator and Miller Cement Silo, winter storage functions for several commercial ships and some cruise ship visitation. The Inner Harbour also boasts of a public infrastructure of urban walkways and parkland on the west side for open space recreation activities.

Facilities

Owen Sound can trace its existence to its excellent natural harbour. The port facilities at one time were extensive and served the surrounding area with processing and shipping. Over the years, as other modes provided more cost effective transport, the port facilities have declined. As noted above, the major shipping facilities include the Great Lakes Elevator and Miller Cement Silo.

Much of the land around the harbour has and is undergoing redevelopment to non-harbour related uses. There are limited facilities in the inner harbour to serve recreational boaters. The Port is open to navigation for nine to ten months each year. The present wharfage is 1,373 metres (4,500') and can berth vehicles with drafts up to 6.4 metres (21').



The harbour is under the jurisdiction of the Federal government, which would like to transfer the harbour to the City. The City should work with the federal government to proceed with improvements to the harbour so that the harbour can maintain its place in the City's transportation system. Divestiture may be considered where ownership, environmental condition, business viability and maintenance responsibility is clear.

Use

There were 41 commercial ship movements in the Port of Owen Sound in 2001. Goods transhipped through the port included grain, cement powder, liquid chloride, bulk salt and wind generators.

The recreational use of the harbour appears to be growing, although no statistics are available on the recreational usage.

Needs

Any potential native land claim issue must be resolved before the harbour is transferred to the City. Once the City has jurisdiction over the harbour, it can proceed with the plans outlined in the Strategic Plan and the Owen Sound Harbour & Downtown Urban Design/Master Plan Strategy report.

Constraints

The major constraints on developing the harbour include environmental condition, infrastructure maintenance and potential native land claim on the harbour. The Federal government would like to transfer the harbour to the City and the City would like the Federal government to do so. Other constraints include divestiture, dredging to seaway depth, and land ownership and development. A divestiture agreement is required between the City and the federal government.

11.2.4 Airport

Facilities

The Billy Bishop Regional Airport is located about 5 km east of Owen Sound on Highway 26. It has a 560 square meter terminal building, which is also one of the most modern in Ontario. A new hanger is under construction.

The main runway (18-36) is oriented north-south, 1200 metres long, 22.9 metres wide, paved and fully lit. There is a VOR/DME instrument approach system. Recently, an east-west grass strip has been developed that is 460 metres long and 20 metres wide. This new strip is for non-winter use only.



There is aircraft refueling, which contributes substantially to the operating revenues for the airport. Between May and December 2002, approximately \$10,400 worth of fuel was sold each month. The total for the period was about \$73,000.

A Strategic Plan for the airport has been developed that identified the additional physical needs of the facility.

Usage

There is no scheduled air service. However, there has been contact with certain regional carriers regarding possible service. There is a flight school, which contributes about a quarter of the aircraft movements. Purolator Courier operates one flight per day, Monday to Friday. There are a number of other commercial flights that make up about 20% of the aircraft movements. Armed forces C-130 and search and rescue aircraft occasional refuel at the airport. The last class of user is medical flights. Fixed wing medical flights tend to be non-emergency flights (e.g., transferring a patient from one medical facility to another). Rotary wing flights tend to be emergency flights (e.g., moving a patient from a vehicle collision to the hospital as quickly as possible). Table 20 shows the number of aircraft movements between April and December 2002.

Type	Number	%
Training	956	25%
Private	2039	52%
Military	51	1%
Commercial	824	21%
Medical	50	1%
Total	3920	100%

Constraints and Needs

One of the key constraints to providing more service at the airport is the prevailing winds. The prevailing winds are east-west, while the main runway is north-south. This restricts use of the airport when there is a strong crosswind. Therefore the immediate need for the airport is to extend the new east-west runway, widen it and provide a hard surface. Additional land will have to be acquired to the east and west to accommodate the new runway. The acquiring of the required property should be pursued expeditiously. This runway should be long enough to accommodate larger aircraft (such as DC 9's, 737's, etc.), which can now be accommodated at Wiarton.

Other needs that can be provided include an instrument landing system (ILS) and a non-directional beacon (NDB). This will permit use of the airport under non-visual flight rules (VFR) conditions.



Another need is on-site customs services. Currently, customs services are provided through the CANPASS Telephone Reporting system.

Airport Strategic Plan

There is a Strategic Plan for the airport that encompasses the above plus other improvements. The City should pursue the recommendations.

The one thing that the airport does not have is a full business plan. Such a plan should be developed to ensure that the Strategic Plan can be accomplished as quickly as possible and to make sure that the airport is promoted as much as possible.

11.3 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Official Plan presents an opportunity to undertake further analysis of the issues discussed above. The need for many studies to update current information and systems has been demonstrated. Without this information and analysis, the City will be in a difficult position to plan for the transportation infrastructure required for the next 20-30 years. Therefore, it is recommended that the City undertake an update to the previous transportation study that will provide sufficient rationale for further improvements to the City transportation system and to provide an up-to-date basis for the formation of transportation policies for the new Official Plan.

On January 1, 2004, Grey County will assume responsibility for 12% of the city's road system. This takeover represents a challenge and an opportunity for the City to work closely together with the County to ensure that the future development of arterial and local roads best meet the needs of the people and businesses in Owen Sound. The recommended transportation study will also require the co-operation of various levels of government and should provide the transportation analysis necessary to guide the development of transportation policies for the Official Plan.

As a regional centre, Owen Sound is the site of air transportation services in the region. The airport provides a valuable service at the present time, and demand for air transport services will likely grow in the future as the population in the region grows and traffic congestion worsens in Southern Ontario. The Official Plan provides an opportunity to strengthen the role of the airport, and act as a catalyst for the development of a business plan to implement its strategic plan.

The federal harbour is an important asset in the City's transportation infrastructure. Regardless of whether it is run by the Federal government or divested to the City, it must be maintained as an active functioning harbour. While its commercial function has declined over the years, the City and the existing users have identified new business opportunities that require this infrastructure be maintained. Recreational use of the harbour may be considered to augment and support commercial harbour use.



The findings of the Public Information Centre indicate that the people of Owen Sound are interested in a transportation system that is environmentally sustainable. They would like to see transportation investment focussed on improving walking and bicycling opportunities and where feasible, improving public transportation. Such initiatives provide the City with an opportunity to enhance its attractiveness to visitors and potential residents and improve overall quality of life, while providing municipal leadership towards the achievement of national goals such as Kyoto. The Official Plan provides an opportunity for the City to plan for a transportation system that is sustainable, cost effective and attractive.



12 SERVICING AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE

Cities rely on services, such as potable water treatment and supply, sewage collection and treatment, surface water management and waste collection and disposal, to maintain a healthy environment for residents who live in close contact with one another, and to allow commercial and industrial businesses to produce and offer a variety of goods and services. Other utility services provided by the private sector, including electricity, telephone and cable television are integral to modern day living and to the production of goods and services. These services form the basic infrastructure, which adds to the quality of life in an urban environment and sustains the economic and social/cultural life that the urban community provides to its residents.

12.1 CURRENT POLICY CONTEXT

Section 4.13.2 of the present Official Plan contains policies relating to stormwater management. Other services are not mentioned.

The City of Owen Sound should develop policies to reflect:

- The level of reliance that the City wishes to have on other municipalities or on the private sector in providing the basic services.
- The role that the City wishes to have as a regional service provider and to define the conditions that might apply to the extension of services into neighbouring municipalities.

12.2 TRENDS AND ISSUES

As in many older Cities, municipal services within the City of Owen Sound have evolved with our understanding of these systems and the development of new technologies. The original domestic water supply was established from the springs at Inglis Falls to service the downtown area. The original sewer system was constructed to convey sewage and surface water directly to the Sydenham River, the Pottawatomi River and the inner harbour area. Remnants of these systems are still in place and operational today.

The proposed Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act would require municipalities to establish and maintain funding levels to replace or repair water and sewage systems. The Act would affect the City both as a provider of these facilities, and also as a user of sewage treatment facilities in neighbouring municipalities.

Policies should reflect the level of reliance the City of Owen Sound wishes to have on others for provisions of these basic services, and the role the City of Owen Sound wishes to play as a regional service provider.



12.2.1 Water Supply and Treatment

The R. H. Neath Water Purification Plant (WPP) was constructed in 1967 to establish a surface water supply for areas of the City not serviced by the spring water supply system. The City operated both systems until 1998, when the spring water system was abandoned. All of the City's potable water is currently supplied from the WPP. The water system has five separate pressure zones and services about 24,000 people, including about 200 people outside of the City limits.

Map 14 Watermain Inventory shows the watermain inventory for the City of Owen Sound.

A 1999 Master Planning Study envisioned expansion of the water distribution system into developing areas beyond the City limits, and projected water demand conditions for a 20 year planning horizon, and beyond. Twenty-one (21) improvement projects were recommended to meet projected future needs over the 20 year planning period. The City continues to implement these recommendations.

Policies should reflect the role of the City of Owen Sound as a regional service provider, and consider the conditions under which the water system might be extended into neighbouring municipalities.

Water Quantity

The WPP has an approved capacity of 42,000 m³/day. Currently, the plant can produce water at a rate of 27,000 m³/day. Upgrades to the plant, scheduled for 2003, would increase the plant capacity to about 35,000 m³/day, maximum day flow.

Currently, the average day water demand is about 13,000 m³/day. The maximum day demand is about 25,000 m³/day. The projected average day water demand to 2019, including exterior growth areas, is 19,600 m³/day. The maximum day demand would be about 37,200 m³/day.

The Water Purification Plant has adequate capacity to service projected future development, however, further upgrades at the WPP may be necessary to satisfy the 20-year future maximum day flow requirements, if the distribution system is expanded to include all exterior growth areas.

The 1999 Master Planning Study concluded that the distribution system was adequate to supply maximum day demands, with noted improvement projects implemented as necessary. Water is stored on the distribution system to meet fire flow requirements. The East Hill reservoir was recently upgraded to provide about 22,700 m³ of storage for the municipal pressure zone, which is adequate to satisfy a 50 year planning horizon, including the Townplot of Brooke and the Sunset Strip. A 15,900 m³ storage reservoir is proposed to improve fire protection in the Industrial pressure zone, within the 20-year planning horizon. A 6,900 m³ reservoir is proposed



on the west side to improve fire protection to the north westerly area of the City, over a 50-year planning horizon.

Water quality

Chemically assisted filtration and disinfection are required under the Safe Drinking Water Act as a minimum level of treatment for a surface water supply. The WPP currently provides this minimum treatment, but with inadequate chlorine contact time. The City plans to install an Ultra Violet disinfection system in 2003 to meet or exceed the requirements of the Ontario Drinking Water Standards and the Act.

12.2.2 Wastewater Treatment

The Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP) was constructed in 1962 to provide primary sewage treatment only. About the same time, the West Side Pumping Station (WSPS) and the East Side Interceptor Sewer (ESIS) were constructed to collect and convey sewage flows to the WPCP. The sewage collection system still has some combined sewers, which contribute a heavy flow load to the collection system and treatment plant during periods of heavy rainfall and runoff. The collection system has twenty four (24) overflow locations, which allow excess flows to surcharge to the Sydenham River, the Pottawatomi River and the inner harbour.

Map 15 Sanitary Sewer Inventory shows the sanitary sewer inventory for the City of Owen Sound.

The collection system also includes ten (10) pumping stations and two inverted siphons, at 8th Street and 10th Street, which transport sewage flows across the Sydenham River from the west side to the ESIS.

City policies should continue to promote the separation of surface water and sewage flows.

Wastewater quantity

Average daily flows at the WPCP are about 14,000 m³/day. The rated average day capacity of the WPCP is 24,500 m³/day. The peak flow capacity of the WPCP is 75,000 m³/day. A 1998 Optimization Study indicated that overflows occur along the ESIS when sewage flows at the WPCP exceed 40,000 m³/day.

Bypasses from the WSPS to the Pottawatomi River occur on occasion, sometimes resulting in the closing of Kelso Beach. Recently, the City installed a surge tank to reduce bypassing at the WSPS. The City plans to construct a new sewage forcemain across the harbour, directly to the WPCP. This project would off-load the ESIS by about 35%, and would further reduce bypasses at the WSPS and overflows along the ESIS route. Peak flows would increase at the WPCP and, therefore, the Optimization Study recommended upgrades at the WPCP to treat a peak flow of 100,000 m³/day.



Although the City collects funds for sewage treatment, a significant portion of the flows to the WPCP are surface water, for which there is no revenue stream. These extraneous flows use up plant capacity and increase maintenance on plant equipment.

Wastewater quality

The WPCP provides only primary treatment of sewage. Primary treatment provides for settling of solids, phosphorous reduction, sludge stabilization and disinfection. Under average day flow conditions the WPCP generally provides a good quality effluent, for a primary plant, although secondary and tertiary treatment would be desirable.

The WPCP is not capable of treating landfill leachate. Leachate collected at the City's landfill site is transported to the Meaford and Collingwood sewage treatment plants. The proposed Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act may result in an increase in rates charged by other municipalities, which receive the City's landfill leachate. The City is setting aside funds to construct a secondary treatment stage, which would allow landfill leachate to be treated at the WPCP. Sewage sludge is stored onsite, dewatered and applied to farmlands as biosolids.

The pending Nutrient Management Act will require the municipality to prepare a nutrient management strategy, which will describe disposal procedures for sewage biosolids.

The City has adopted a sewer use bylaw, which describes the quality of wastewater that the City will receive.

12.2.3 Surface Water Management

Surface water management is often referred to as stormwater management, although the design practices also are reflective of runoff from snowmelt. Since snowmelt flows are difficult to predict, surface water management plans are based on estimated runoff from statistical rainfall events. Rainfall data is recorded at the WPCP. This data has not been consolidated since 1986.

Municipal storm sewers, which outlet flows to the Sydenham River, the Pottawatomi River and the inner harbour, service much of the City. The City continues to construct storm sewers, where none exist, to provide separation of surface water flows and sewage flows. **Map 16 Storm Sewer Inventory** shows the storm sewer inventory for Owen Sound.

Although site controls for surface water quantity control and quality control may be encouraged, it is not practical to police these systems after they are installed, to ensure their long-term performance.

Policies should reflect a desire by the City to own and operate surface water control systems.



Surface water quantity

Typically, municipal storm sewer systems are designed to convey runoff from the 1:5 year return rainfall event, under post-development conditions within the catchment area. The municipal road system is used to direct excess flows on the surface to the rivers and inner harbour. This system works well in most of Owen Sound due to the natural “bowl” shaped topography.

The City is located at the low end of the drainage areas for the Sydenham and Pottawatomi Rivers. Therefore, there is little impact from development within the City on peak flows in the rivers. As long as appropriate infrastructure is in place downstream to accommodate post-development peak flows, individual site controls for surface water may not be necessary, or desirable. It is very difficult for a municipality to ensure long-term performance and maintenance of private, onsite surface water management systems.

The Kenny Drain Stormwater Management Plan reviewed the impacts of development within Special Policy Area No. 1 (annexed lands), and identified the need for stormwater management ponds on the Kenney Drain to maintain manageable flows downstream. Stormwater management ponds were recently constructed east of 16th Street East, and in the north easterly area of the City, to accommodate development within the Sydenham Heights Planning Area (Phase 1).

Surface water flows from neighbouring municipalities enter the City’s storm sewer systems, particularly on the west side, with little or no control of quantity or quality.

Surface water quality

Surface water quality control is achieved by collecting runoff from low intensity, high frequency rainfall events, which cause sediments to be transported in runoff. This water is treated, usually by separating oils and providing sufficient storage time to allow solids to settle, before it is released.

A surface water management pond, constructed near the outlet to the Kenney Drain system, provides some degree of quality control before flows are released to the outer harbour. The City recently began installing “stormceptor” units on major storm sewer outlets to further improve the quality of runoff water to the rivers and inner harbour.

The City has adopted a Storm Sewer Use Bylaw, which describes the quality of water that can be released to a City storm sewer.

12.2.4 Solid Waste Management

The City owns and operates the Genoe landfill site, north east of the City, in the former Sydenham Township. The 60 ha landfill site has a 10 ha footprint and fills at a rate of 25,000 tonnes/year. The site will reach planned capacity in about two (2) years (2005). The landfill is



an engineered site, which provides leachate collection. Since the City's WPCP provides only primary treatment, leachate is transported to Meaford and Collingwood for treatment and disposal.

About 1998, the City and the County of Grey undertook a Class Environmental Assessment process to review potential landfill sites. The study concluded that expansion of the existing site was the preferred alternative to service north Grey County and the City of Owen Sound to accommodate 40,000 tonnes/year for the next 25 years. The City of Owen Sound, however, cannot proceed with the Environmental Assessment application to expand the Genoe site due to current legal issues. The County of Grey has removed itself from the process. Waste would probably have to be hauled out of the region, possibly to the United States, if current landfill issues cannot be resolved. Miller Waste and Superior Street Sand and Gravel have established private waste transfer stations to assist the City, should the need arise.

In order to preserve existing landfill capacity, the City of Owen Sound has aggressively pursued a variety of waste diversion programs designed to reduce, reuse and recycle materials, which would otherwise end up as landfill. These programs meet or exceed the requirements of Ontario Regulation 101/94 – Recycling and Composting of Municipal Waste. The main benefit of these programs is a reduction in the landfill usage rate, but further, these programs encourage the responsible use of our natural resources by finding alternatives to disposal for many materials.

The City has implemented a variety of waste diversion efforts including:

- Landfill ban on divertible wastes,
- Bag tags,
- Blue box recycling,
- Compost site,
- Household hazardous waste program,
- Electronics recycling,
- Wood waste diversion,
- CFC collection,
- Tires recycling,
- Cardboard collection
- Styrofoam and polystyrene recycling

Other potential programs include curb side pick up of leaf and yard waste for composting, in-vessel composting, Styrofoam and poly-styrene recycling, aseptic container (tetrapak) recycling and source separation to wet/dry/blue box streams.

Many industrial and commercial businesses employ private contractors to collect waste from on-site bins and to deliver waste to the landfill site. In some of these cases, businesses have not achieved a satisfactory level of waste diversion. The City has employed staff to enforce the landfill ban on divertible materials, and has increased the landfill tipping fees in an effort to encourage further waste reduction from these sources.



Some key development lands are former industrial sites (Brownfields), which may require “marginally” contaminated soils to be removed. City policy is to accept waste soils that meet Table D of the MOE Guideline for Use at Contaminated Sites (\$50/tonne) or, if waste soil exceeds Table D but passes the Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure (TCLP) test (\$100/tonne).

It would be very costly to haul waste soils a long distance if a local landfill site was not available, which may make development of the brownfield sites cost prohibitive.

Policies should reflect a desire by the City to be self reliant for this basic service.

12.2.5 Nutrient Management

Protecting and managing the City of Owen Sound’s natural features is a key task in ensuring the optimal quality of life for its citizens. As part of this task, efforts to properly manage the City’s water supply, agricultural practices, nutrients, and other land applied materials have come into shape by utilizing regulatory provisions, guidelines, voluntary best management practices and municipal bylaws. In rural areas, the management of such resources is also vital in ensuring economic and social vitality amongst the resource operators and industry such as the food, paper and mining industries. In the past, nutrient management has been a success in some municipalities and has been a failure in others such as the case Walkerton; where the poor quality of the water supply lead to sickness and death in the community. Understanding and implementing a the balance between the sensible management of nutrients and the economic stability in nutrient based markets requires Municipal and Provincial policy directions, which attempt to maximize public awareness of the proper management practices in the areas of agriculture, water, and other natural resources.

The Nutrient Management Act

The *Nutrient Management Act* received Royal Assent on June 27 2002 and it sets out province-wide standards to address the effects of agricultural practices on the environment, especially as they relate to land-applied materials containing nutrients. The Act was developed the Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF) and the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MOEE) using the recommendations of many private and public sector sources. The Act set forth the following criteria:

- A comprehensive and integrated approach to all land-applied resources and the safe disposal of deadstock.
- A clear, province-wide standard for farmers to invest with confidence in the agricultural businesses of in rural municipalities.
- Directions for ensuring that all land-applied materials will be managed in a sustainable, beneficial manner that results in environmental and water quality protection.



This legislation contains a framework known as the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP), which is science based and examines how manure, commercial fertilizers and existing soil fertility are effectively managed in an environmentally friendly approach. This examination provided the legislation to develop sensible operation tactics to achieve an understanding of the several requirements for all land-applied materials that contain nutrients and materials such as municipal biosolids and pulp and paper sludge. Many guidelines have already been developed through the use *Nutrient Management Act*.

The legislation also provides for mechanisms of authority in enforcing the guidelines for nutrient based management policies and the legislation also was developed in line with other environmental legislation that gives government officers who have knowledge in agriculture and the environment authority to inspect and issue compliance and preventive orders. The right to appeal to the Environmental Review Tribunal is also a component in the legislation.

Municipal Responsibility

The *Nutrient Management Act* will encompass key responsibilities for municipal governments to follow and adhere to. Municipalities will be able to utilize the Act as a support for their land use planning and building code processes, with regards to agricultural practices. Also, municipalities will be able to create local advisory committees to research, enforce rules and recommend changes to the policies affecting nutrient management. New standards for the Act were developed through an extensive public consultation process, which was aimed at listening to the public and key industry leaders for their opinion on tactics and the current state of nutrient management practices.

As of July 1, 2003 the following changes to the Act will be implemented by the Provincial government:

- The definition of a Nutrient Unit, is now the amount of manure that gives the fertilizer replacement value of the lower of 43kg (95 pounds) of nitrogen or 55kg (121 pounds) of phosphate.
- Setting up a provincial advisory committee to provide recommendations to the government regarding nutrient management issues.
- Making 2005 the implementation date for existing large livestock farms.

Other changes including developing setbacks for odour related uses, restrictions for siting and construction of nutrient storage, as well as manure handling and application near municipal wells have been deferred for further examination by the committee and recommendations regarding such issues will be brought forward in the near future.

12.3 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

At a general level, the challenge to the City is to provide good quality basic services (water, sewer, surface water management, landfill) at a reasonable cost to the taxpayers/service users.



This is a challenge because the City is facing several large infrastructure items such as the landfill, cross harbour forcemain, new bridge, harbour divestiture, rivewalk improvements, and a growing backlog of the usual infrastructure decay. While these items are important to maintaining quality of life and growing in the manner that the city desires, growth projections do not show a potential for significant new dollars from new development. As such the city will have to make choices about priorities for infrastructure development, priorities in timing and in scope.

The Official Plan presents an opportunity to expand current services to areas of future development. Although a large portion of currently developed areas are well served by public services, not all potential development areas are. In particular, Special Policy Area 1, in which only phase 1 of 4 phases of development has occurred, does not have the capacity to service future phases of growth. The City would probably need to use taxpayers dollars to extend services to Special Policy Area 1, Phases 2, 3, 4 to encourage developers to build in that area because, in this area developments are generally too small to afford the up front costs on their own. Should the Official Plan envision expanded growth to SPA 1, it will need to be supported by a capital works program in advance of development, and as discussed, other capital works projects may need to ‘wait their turn’.

Another challenge for Owen Sound and the Region over the next two years and beyond is to resolve the issue of the landfill. The challenge for the Official Plan occurs in the re-development of brownfields. The Official Plan may wish to actively promote the re-development of brownfield areas, as was recommended in the *City of Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan*. However, it would be very costly to haul waste soils a long distance if a local landfill site was not available, which may make development of the Brownfield sites cost prohibitive.

The Official Plan also creates an opportunity for the City to further establish itself as a regional service provider. Once the City has control of the basic infrastructure, these services may be extended beyond the City limits to increase the number of users who pay for the services, thus reducing the costs to City residents. Once residents outside the City have these services available, they may begin to understand the benefits of becoming part of the City.

The Official Plan process presents an opportunity for the City to encourage and/or bring homes and businesses on private services in to the municipal system. As people begin to engage in the planning process – the planning for future growth - they will have an opportunity to better understand the benefits that municipal services offer. The City is challenged to provide this perspective and to counteract a perception that the costs may outweigh the benefits.

In the area of nutrient management, the Official Plan process will be an opportunity to review and examine key nutrient areas in Owen Sound, through public consultation processes and background studies on water treatment, waste disposal, agricultural nutrient practices and pesticides.





13 KEY DIRECTIONS FOR THE OFFICIAL PLAN

The City of Owen Sound is at an important juncture in its planning process. Since the development of the last Official Plan, Southern Ontario has grown at a rapid rate, both in population and in size. The demand for housing and space will continue to grow in Southern Ontario as well as in the areas to the north that support recreational services and properties. Owen Sound is poised to benefit from that growth, in a manner that is consistent with its traditional pattern of growth as a regional centre with strong local services, and as a community in which people can live, work and raise a family without the drawbacks of larger cities. Owen Sound is not likely to grow as a commuter suburb for the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Also, Owen Sound will not grow as an exclusive tourist destination with a transient population. Owen Sound represents an alternative to the fast paced lifestyle of the large urban areas and the transient nature of the vacation communities. It maintains characteristics of traditional 'small town' living with 'big city' services.

The findings of this report are based on the research and analysis of a team specialized in each of the different areas. The findings are also based on the comments received through the Public Information Centre (PIC) on May 29, 2003 where the team heard from City Councillors, staff and community members. The written responses received from members of the public during and after the PIC can be found in Appendix H.

To complete the report and to assimilate the findings of all the chapters, we have conducted a constraint mapping exercise in which areas of potential development have been examined in relation to the constraints such as servicing capacity and environmental features. This section provides the key directions for the Official Plan that emerge from the report and the constraint mapping. The section presents a set of proposed directions for the development of the Official Plan for Owen Sound. It also lays out the policy and research supports that would be required to ensure that the vision for growth that the City desires is possible.

13.1 PLANNING FOR HIGH GROWTH

In Section 3, population projections were presented for three scenarios, the Share of Growth Scenario, the Slow Growth Scenario, and the Economic Revival Scenario. Each scenario is plausible, and their achievement dependent on the planning framework in place and the implementation of additional policy supports. To ensure that the planning framework developed through the Official Plan meets the potential demands of at least the next twenty years, it will need to be based on the highest levels of population projection. Under this scenario, Owen Sound would grow by approximately 21% in the next 20 years and require up to 2800 new housing units to accommodate this growth. This Official Plan must target these projections to ensure that if this scenario materializes, the City is prepared to accommodate the growth.



Although the lifespan of official plans is 20 years, we have prepared population projections for the next 30 years. This is to ensure that the Official Plan establishes a base of policies consistent with future developments that require long term planning, such as transportation and other infrastructure. Under the Economic Revival Scenario, Owen Sound is projected to grow even more rapidly in the latter part of the 30-year projection.

Questions were raised at the PIC regarding the composition of the demographic projections. The study has shown that Owen Sound's population has a higher percentage of seniors than the Ontario average and that growth is due at least in part to higher portion of seniors than the provincial average. But participants in the PIC confirmed what this research has concluded, which is that to thrive as a regional centre with a high quality of life, the city needs to attract a variety of age groups and skilled people who can contribute to the labour force and the on-going vitality of the community.

13.2 LAND USE ADEQUACY

This report, and others that have looked at market needs, have concluded that the City appears to have sufficient land designated for industrial and commercial purposes for the next 20 years, or the expected life of the new Plan. In fact, some industrial properties are either vacant or under-utilized. As there may be contamination issues that require resolution if other uses are to be proposed for these properties, one of the challenges for the Official Plan is to review the lands zoned for industrial purposes and determine what tools are useful or appropriate to bring about change in this area. The lands in the far northeast quadrant of the city may be candidates for redesignation. The Commercial Needs Study has established empirical support for key policy initiatives that should be considered for the new OP.

There also appears to be sufficient land available for residential purposes. This land, however, may not present the greatest opportunity for residential development that will attract builders and buyers. In addition, new development is taking place outside the City limits, and to some extent it is pulling growth that could be attracted to Owen Sound. One of the region's characteristics is that it attracts new residents who are seeking recreational property in the first instance. It is only after they get established in a recreational property does the possibility of moving into the City become more likely. The Official Plan must be able to provide a framework for residential development that attracts people to the City itself. The selection of appropriate places for growth and development in the residential sector are therefore important.

13.3 RECOMMENDED OFFICIAL PLAN DIRECTIONS

13.3.1 A Place in the Region

The emerging background work towards the new Owen Sound Official Plan is suggesting a number of new Official Plan statements in the City's Plan dealing with Owen Sound's place in the region. Economic Development and Tourism, Cultural Heritage, Parks and Recreation all



speak to the role of the City in the regional context. Indeed, any growth management policy for the municipality needs to be looked at in the regional context, so that the region can grow and thrive in a coherent and appropriate way. By providing the support to Owen Sound in this way, the County can help direct development and investment into the hamlets, towns, and cities where appropriate and help ensure that development does not spread in ways that diminish natural and agricultural resources or create inefficient servicing patterns.

Owen Sound will need to play a key role in defining the policies required to build an understanding of its place as the centre of Grey and Bruce Counties. The City has extensive investment in infrastructure, both hard and soft, and it is important that development patterns build on this infrastructure investment. The City has adopted a set of draft policies for the County Plan that emphasize its role as a regional centre. The Official Plan should give support to the notion of a regional centre, a development pattern that recognizes the full range of uses and densities within the Owen Sound Regional Centre, and allow for a set of policies that encourage the full optimization of these uses and densities.

It also suggests that the County can be important in discouraging development in areas outside the Regional Centre that hinder the efficient development of Owen Sound or other urban areas. Boundary related development issues are going to become an increasing issue in the Municipality and the County, and it is important that the Official Plan at the County level speaks to those issues.

13.3.2 New Areas for Development

The consultant team has examined the natural and built features of the Owen Sound area in conjunction with a review of population projections. We have looked at where development has occurred in the last 20 years as an indicator of the development potential of different parts of the city.

As discussed above, new development areas should be examined for residential purposes as the city already has sufficient well-placed land for commercial and industrial purposes. In addition, as discussed under land use, the City's vision for growth management should essentially focus on developing within existing municipal boundaries.

Consideration to expand the land area of Owen Sound may be attractive for several reasons, for example to control development and servicing in those areas. However, it is not required or even recommended for planning reasons. Rather, the County Plan is the means to ensure that a regional perspective, which embraces Owen Sound as the centre is a shared vision for the surrounding areas.

This report recommends a vision for the Official Plan that includes five new development areas, as shown on **Maps 17 Constraints** and **Map 18 Growth Options**.



Owen Sound Harbour

The harbour area has been studied extensively through the *Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown and Master Plan Strategy*. The area contains significant lands designated industrial, although not all properties are used to their fullest potential. Some sites are also contaminated and cannot easily be put to other uses.

This report recommends that the Official Plan focus special attention on intensifying the downtown for increased residential and commercial usage and creating linkages to the harbour areas with commercial and mix-uses. The attractiveness of this area for living is clearly related to the vistas and scenery that the harbour provides. New residential development could take on a variety of forms, taking full advantage of the waterfront potential.

The East Harbour area should integrate with a re-vitalized downtown, and promote the conversion of older under-used industrial buildings in to commercial spaces. Some of the industrial uses close to downtown should be reviewed for their compatibility. The harbour presents an asset that is marketable for commercial and residential purposes even under current conditions.

As the *Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown and Master Plan Strategy* indicated, the industrial and shipping activities in the harbour play a key local and regional role. This use should be preserved and enhanced, and integrated with a re-vitalized east harbour that is linked to the downtown. Owen Sound should continue to play a key role in providing shipping access for the region. As such, the Official Plan should consider the economic merits of dredging the harbour to provide increased access for larger vessels and creating a crossing link across the harbour.

This dual role for the harbour will make it a unique location for commercial and industrial activity, and a desirable tourist destination as well.

As the *Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown and Master Plan Strategy* indicated, much work remains to be done to revitalize the harbour area. This report supports the implementation of that plan and recommends that the Official Plan embrace it and augment it with additional residential development in the downtown and along the East Harbour. If the City is able to successfully negotiate control of the harbour from the federal government, it will be in a better position to implant its vision for the future.

(Northern) East Bluffs re-development

The most northern part of the city is designated industrial and rural though the industrial is not fully developed at this time.

This report recommends that the Official Plan move towards the re-designation of this area for future residential and commercial mixed-use purposes, without undermining the existing commercial in the areas. This area is conveniently located close to the water providing potential



vistas for future residential development. As the area is not within walking distance to commercial areas, the neighbourhood should seek to incorporate smaller commercial enterprises which can serve local needs in the interior areas and more regional, city-wide tourist destination commercial spaces along the waterfront.

Some residential properties already exist in the most northern part of the area making it additionally suitable for future residential development. The viability of existing major industries must be maintained and supported.

The areas recommended for new residential development are already well served by municipal facilities. There is a pumping station in the northern end and a new watermain will soon be added. As such, the servicing of additional residential lots would require relatively little investment.

In addition to the harbour, the area is well-served by community facilities and parks. McArthur Park and Stony Orchard Park serve a wildlife corridor and provide an attractive natural setting for the neighbourhood.

Special Policy Area 1

Special Policy Area 1 was considered as Amendment 6 to the 1984 Official Plan. The area has seen changes in its development pattern from what was originally envisaged, with some of what was originally designated residentially eventually amended to commercial.

For development purposes, Special Policy Area 1 has been divided into four phases. Phase 1 was been initiated with the commercial development that included the Home Depot and Wal-Mart. Phases 2-4 have not yet proceeded due to the lack of municipal water and sewage services available in the area.

It is recommended that the Official Plan move forward with this area as a site for primarily future residential development and serve as a vehicle for the development of a capital program to upgrade hard services in the area. This work might include reviewing the Sydenham Heights Secondary Plan and re-designating some of the rural areas.

While the capital investment required to service this area is large, it is preferable than residential development in the large industrial area to the north or annexation of areas adjacent to the city. Each of these options would also bring large expense as well as incurring other perhaps larger political costs.

Special Policy Area 1 was envisioned with the potential to grow. It has the space capacity to accommodate growth and it positions growth adjacent to a commercial area which is supportive of other policies in this report which encourage a mix of uses throughout the city. For this reason, it remains a solid option for future residential development.



Special Policy Area 1 also contains two of the regions greatest assets, in close proximity with each other, Georgian College and the hospital. These two assets attract skilled workers to the City and provide a core for research and development activities. The Official Plan should consider ways to augment the capacity of these institutions, through means such as special designations which would attract a skilled labour force to the immediate vicinity.

13.3.3 Official Plan Policies

The Official Plan sets the stage for a number of policies to guide development in the city over the next 20 years. The following section looks at the policy recommendations that emerge from the analysis of issues presented in this report. They have been developed to support the vision of the city that the Council has adopted through the Strategic Plan, and would support the type of growth and development envisaged in this report and the for the new development areas proposed.

Industrial Lands

It is recommended that the new Official Plan should give direction and support for:

- Reuse of older, vacant industrial lands in the harbour area for other purposes – tourist-related commercial, residential, public/event areas and open space.
- Decommissioning of these former industrial sites where soils are contaminated.
- Retaining existing industrial and shipping uses in the harbour area that remain active and viable.
- Appropriate means of separating and buffering industrial uses from other uses.
- Review of the existing Community Improvement Plan for the Downtown and Harbour Area to determine if further action and additional tools are needed to revitalize the harbour area and its older industrial lands.
- Adjustment of the mix and range of uses and form of development allowed on designated industrial lands (i.e., large lot industrial format versus business park format).
- Continuing City efforts in the development and sale of industrial lands.
- Other business attraction efforts that are not directly related to land use requirements – (i.e., use of tax incentive through area designations; marketing; cost competitiveness).
- Reviewing industrial designations in certain parts of the city.
- Continuing to own and expand city industrial park, particularly the northeast quadrant and the area south of 8th Street E. east of 9th Avenue E.

Commercial Lands

It is recommended that the new Official Plan should give direction and support for:

- The four (4) existing commercial nodes will be the focus of future commercial development.
- Each area can thrive as it develops its own unique range and mix of commercial activities, being:
 - the Downtown – primary source of service/office commercial space and small format, high-end retail outlets; promote residential intensification while



- maintaining the commercial streetscape of the Downtown; consider reuse of certain lands in the harbour area for residential use; address parking needs
- Heritage Place Mall – remain the principal enclosed regional mall
 - East City Commercial Area – adjacent to Heritage Place Mall, this area is absorbing most of the recent commercial growth, primarily of large format stores
 - West City Commercial Area – an area that straddles the municipal boundary and offers a range of retail goods; further growth should be restricted so as not to rival the Downtown or East City.
- Maintain a ‘Downtown First’ policy directing appropriate uses to the Downtown as noted above.
 - Preserve the balance that has been achieved between the commercial nodes.
 - Maintain flexibility to redesignate lands in certain locations for commercial use if it is warranted to meet neighbourhood demands and to redesignate commercial lands for other uses including mixed uses when the reuse does not negatively impact on the viability of the commercial area and is supported by sound planning rationale (i.e., residential intensification in the Downtown policies of Community Improvement Plan)
 - Continue City efforts in directing the future development of commercial space in the City and exert influence on the decision-making of neighbouring municipalities to limit commercial development outside the City boundary.
 - Establish policies that place the onus on proponents who are seeking designation of new commercial lands to demonstrate, at their expense, that the current supply of commercial lands are inadequate or not appropriate for future commercial development.

Tourism

Tourism offers a significant opportunity for new economic growth. To be realized, an aggressive approach to regional tourism development is required. Working with other regional partners, Owen Sound must pursue the development of destination-quality facilities that will reinforce the current tourism demand and can extend the tourism season into the shoulder seasons and to year round visitations. The development of Escarpment Centre Ontario suits these objectives.

It is recommended that the new Official Plan should give direction and support for:

- Four (4) strategic directions, being:
 - Eco-Tourism – development of the proposed Escarpment Centre Ontario and associated trails and ecological areas; consider better protection of assets such as trees
 - Cultural Tourism – support for existing museums and other cultural and heritage facilities; anticipate/accommodate future land requirements
 - the Harbour – the water gateway to Owen Sound; ensure that the harbour can thrive as both a shipping/industrial and recreational/tourist area with a mix of uses; reinforce linkages with the Downtown and ensure that the Downtown offers attractive streetscaping and evening and weekend street life for visitors



- Regional Tourism Hub – offers unique services and opportunities to regional visitors on a year round basis including: accommodation and food service; entertainment and sport; festivals and events; and, conference facilities
- Other tourism marketing efforts that are not directly related to land use requirements – (i.e., regional tourism strategy; marketing; cost competitiveness).

Home-Based Business

It is recommended that the new Official Plan should give direction and support for:

- A broad and supportive policy for home based business in the Official Plan and then provide direction for specific performance requirements to be found in the City's Zoning By-law:
 - The home-based business is secondary to the residential use.
 - The business operation does not introduce unwanted and inappropriate (non-residential) impacts in the host community.
 - The business operation does not change the outward appearance of the residential use.
 - The business operation does not adversely affect the future viability of the residential neighbourhood.

Urban Design

The urban design process should be set out in the official plan. First, the City needs to identify the qualitative goals that it wishes to achieve in new development and in existing areas. It then sets out a process for defining the more specific objectives and design approaches for a particular area or project. Retrofitting older commercial areas with urban design initiatives should be considered, especially the 10th Street West corridor.

Downtown:

The present strategy for strengthening the downtown involves repairing and improving the heritage building facades, infilling the gaps and improving the streetscape. To do this well requires more urban design guidance than is presently available.

The following are some issues that we recommend be considered in the Plan review:

- Adopt qualitative goals for the development of the downtown area.
- Develop comprehensive design guidelines for new development in the DIA.
- Amend Community Improvement Policy Areas to coincide with the Downtown Improvement Area and the Harbour Improvement Area (Bayshore, Inner Harbour and West Harbour).
- Identify precincts as set out in the Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan.
- Encourage improvements to buildings and use of upper floors.
- Downtown River Precinct:
 - Give priority to retail commercial and public uses.
 - Facilitate use of the streets as a programmed public event/festival venue.



- Encourage development of restaurant and entertainment uses facing on 1st Avenue East.
- Central Downtown Precinct:
 - Support the role as a location for office, entertainment, and residential.
 - Encourage infill and intensification.
 - Develop comprehensive plan for mid-block parking.
- South Downtown Precinct:
 - Support transition role with commercial use and residential intensification.

Harbour

With the potential for considerable redevelopment activity in the Harbour area over the next 20 years, it is critical to provide a vision of how the area might develop with various forms of housing and commercial development. By looking at the options before development proposals are submitted, some general development principals can be recognized and defined in urban design objectives. This has not yet been carried through in the Owen Sound Harbour and Downtown Master Plan.

- Develop and adopt urban design objectives for the development of the harbour area.
- Identify precincts as set out in the Harbour and Downtown Master Plan.
- Consider including the commercial area along Second Avenue East from 13th Street E. to the Bayshore Complex in the Inner Harbour Improvement Area.
- Recognize keystone role of the Inner Harbour precinct as the linkage between the downtown and the Harbour.
- Encourage replacement of abandoned industrial uses with complementary commercial and residential development that maintains public access to the waterfront.
- Ensure the federal government properly maintains the harbour assets and addresses issues of environmental conditions, land claims and business viability, and consider divestiture only when these issues are addressed.
- Continue to pursue the business case for dredging, in support of existing business interests in the harbour.

New Residential Areas

The Official Plan should set out the urban design objectives for new housing development. This would guide secondary plans for areas such as the Special Policy Area No. 1 (Sydenham Heights) annexation. Existing secondary plans should be incorporated into the Plan and amended to reflect the qualitative issues of importance to the City.

The following are some issues that we recommend be considered in the Plan review:

- Develop and adopt urban design objectives for the development of new residential areas.
- Encourage housing forms that use land efficiently, allowing higher densities to be achieved.
- Ensure that design guidelines are set out for any new development area prior to considering development proposals.



Commercial Uses

- Develop and adopt urban design objectives for the development of commercial uses on both local streets and arterial roads like 16th Street East and 10th Street West.
- Address the issue of the location of large parking lots and the landscaping and urban design features of new and existing development.

Urban Design - Industrial Areas

- Develop and adopt urban design objectives for the development of industrial areas.

Significant Public Views

- Identify significant public views and consider them in decisions regarding the location and heights of buildings.

Cultural heritage

- The Official Plan objectives should reflect all aspects of cultural heritage: to identify, recognize, protect, enhance, promote and manage all heritage resources including historical records, art, artifacts, places, buildings and areas.
- It should also support and encourage cultural initiatives, events and institutions in the arts (visual, musical, theatrical, dance and literary).
- Amend designation of property as having cultural heritage value or interest rather than historic or architectural value or interest.
- Consider incentives to protect heritage resources such as tax relief, bonusing of height or density, technical assistance or grants.

Recreation

- Through a review and update of the Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, adopt a Parks and Recreation Master Plan for the City.
- Address the recreation needs of all age groups in the Plan review.
- Define City's leadership and partnering role in the provision of recreational services and facilities on a regional level.
- Provide support for cultural activities by encouraging the provision and retention of museums, galleries, libraries, theatres, arenas and other suitable facilities within the city.
- Promote the inclusion of spaces for cultural activities and events in public spaces, parks and public buildings.

Parks and Open Space

- Review and adopt the Parks and Open Space Hierarchy as outlined in the 1991 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, identifying:
 - Neighbourhood Parks;
 - Community Parks;



- City Parks;
- Linkage parks and open space; and
- Regional parks and open space.
- Review and adopt the Parks and Open Space Provision Standards as outlined in the 1991 Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan, requiring:
 - Neighbourhood Parks - 0.5 hectares per 1000 population;
 - Community Parks- 1.5 hectares per 1000 population;
 - City Parks- 1.5 hectares per 1000 population; and
 - Linkage parks and open space - as required
- Establish park requirements for new development at the secondary plan stage.
- Establish guidelines for parkland dedication through the subdivision process, including any linkage open spaces, trails and the development of a park site plan.
- Establish park design standards for neighbourhood, community and city parks and requirements for accessible features.
- Develop a concept plan for park and trail development along the entire east harbour/Bayshore - consider closing 1st Avenue East from 11th Street to 10th Street for an urban waterfront park.
- Maintain and enhance public access to the waterfront and shore.
- Establish a park reserve at the northern end of the East Harbour Precinct near 14th and 15th streets.

Trails

- Develop city-wide trail systems for pedestrians and cyclists providing safe and convenient connections between neighbourhoods and significant city locations.
- Facilitate the connection of regional trail systems to City bicycle and pedestrian trails.
- Facilitate the development of trail use and linkages on parklands.
- Secure selected abandoned rail corridors where possible for trail and utility purposes;
- Designate disused publicly owned rail corridor for Open Space use.
- Prepare and adopt a Trails Master Plan to guide the development of trails.
- Develop a snowmobile access policy to provide appropriate connections from regional snowmobile trails and safe access to necessary destinations within the city.
- Link Escarpment centre Ontario and Grey Roots with a regionally significant trail system.

Transportation

- The City should develop a clear definition for road classification and undertake a review of the existing system to ensure that the classifications of the roadways match their functional characteristics.
- The City should undertake a detailed review of these “missing” road links to determine if there are advantages to opening them to use.
- The City should adopt a right-of-way width plan as part of the new Official Plan to insure that it can obtain the appropriate road widenings when lands develop and/or when roads

have to be widened. There is a three step process to establish the plan. First, the City should review the current right-of-way width standards to ensure that future requirements for lanes and services can be incorporated in the standards. Once that is done, the City should review the right-of-way widths of the existing roads to determine the current widths. Thirdly, the City should determine if there will be a future need for further road widenings.

- The City is moving towards a central traffic control system and should proceed as quickly as resources permit.
- The City should adopt a policy or set of guidelines on access to all roads, and to arterial roads in particular, to ensure that the needs for good traffic operations are balanced by the access needs of adjacent land development.
- The truck routes should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are appropriate and that they are operating satisfactorily.
- Every opportunity to expand the bicycles route system should be pursued.
- As with bicycle routes, every opportunity should be pursued to expand the walking routes.
- The City should adopt a policy or set of guidelines for access to all roads, so that access to arterial roads can be minimized where desirable and permitted elsewhere under a set of well-known conditions.
- The zoning by-laws should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that the parking requirements are sufficient for new developments and for redevelopments.
- The City should adopt a policy governing the use and design of traffic calming measures.
- The Official Plan should encourage the retention and improvement of the public transit system to provide a viable alternative to use of the private automobile in new development and existing ones within the city.
- The immediate need for the airport is to extend the new east-west runway, widen it and provide a hard surface. Additional property will be required for this expansion and the acquiring of the required property should be pursued expeditiously.
- A business plan should be developed for the Billy Bishop Regional Airport to ensure that the airport's Strategic Plan can be accomplished as quickly as possible and to make sure that the airport is promoted as much as possible many of these recommendations and needs require further analysis.
- The City and the federal government must ensure the harbour remains as a viable transportation alternative to roads.

Therefore, it is recommended that the City undertake an up-date to the previous transportation study that will provide sufficient rationale for further improvements to the City transportation system and to provide an up-to-date basis for the formation of transportation policies for the new Official Plan.



Servicing

- Policies should reflect the level of reliance the City of Owen Sound wishes to have on others for provision of these basic services, and the role the City of Owen Sound wishes to play as a regional service provider.
- As a regional service provider, the City of Owen Sound should develop policies which would not only make the City self reliant with respect to these basic urban services, but would also reflect the conditions under which these services might be extended into neighbouring municipalities.

Nutrient Management

- Promote public and industry awareness of the *Nutrient Management Act* throughout the Public Consultation Process of the new Official Plan.
- Enforce the use of Nutrient Management Plans in the new Official Plan for areas believed to contain high nutrient levels and for agricultural practices.
- Review and re-examine key nutrient areas in Owen Sound, through public consultation processes and background studies on water treatment, waste disposal, agricultural nutrient practices and pesticides during the Official Plan process.

Natural Heritage

- Build on the natural heritage system strategy outlined above to designate and protect significant components of the natural heritage system of Owen Sound.
- Ensure that development proceeds in tandem with environmental protection.
- Protect floodplains, escarpment slopes, shoreline and river access where fresh habitat or corridor protection concerns exist.
- Link major natural areas such as West Rocks, Harrison Park and conservation areas outside the city.

13.4 CONCLUSION

This recommended model of development and the policies proposed for consideration in the Official Plan are consistent with the recommendations that have been adopted as part of the City's Strategic Plan and in the Downtown and Harbour Master Plan. They are also consistent with the comments expressed at the PIC. As such, they build and strengthen the ideas and plans that City Council and the community have voiced. The Official Plan must be a significant tool towards the implementation of the vision.

The recommended approach for the Official Plan is also consistent with an environmentally sustainable future for Owen Sound. It gives priority to the re-use and strengthening of existing assets, envisions a centralized model of development and proposes numerous policies to support the efficient use of resources and the preservation of Owen Sound's natural and built heritage.



These recommendations should set the course towards for the new Official Plan process.