



Community Improvement Plan

Bala & Port Carling



December, 2021
Chapter 6 revised March, 2025



Duke's Boats building in Port Carling

5 Urban Design Guidelines

Purpose of the Guidelines

Urban design involves the arrangement and design of the built environment and provides a framework that gives form, shape and character to buildings, public spaces, streets and amenities. It blends architecture, landscape architecture and town planning together to enhance the urban centres of Bala and Port Carling. The Urban Design Guidelines promote high quality urban design that is based upon the quality, scale and character of the surrounding existing and emerging contexts, reinforce 'human scaled' environments, and promote a sense of place.

Urban Design Guidelines provide design guidance, criteria, and standards for how to shape the built environment, both the individual elements, as well as how these should be spatially arranged and relate to one another. The Guidelines are intended to provide direction for architects, landscape architects, engineers and developers to understand the Township's objectives for design in the Community Improvement Areas. The Guidelines also inform staff and Council in their review, and approval of development applications.

Urban Design Guidelines are a planning tool that work alongside zoning, site plan control and technical standards to implement the vision of the Official Plan. The Guidelines will be used through the development process including site planning, landscape and building design.

The Urban Design Guidelines are divided into two sections:

- **Private Realm** (buildings, loading, access, parking, pedestrian access)
- **Public Realm** (streets and public spaces)

This chapter describes the character areas in Port Carling and Bala, sets the context by defining compatibility and 'Muskoka style', highlights the urban design structure for Port Carling and Bala, includes guidelines for the private realm, direction for the key large sites in Bala and Port Carling and public realm guidelines for streets and parks.

Character Areas

A number of areas with a particular character of built form, streetscape and landscape are identifiable in both Urban Centres.

Port Carling

Four segments have been identified in Port Carling as illustrated on the map below.

Highway 118 West

- Western gateway to Port Carling with water access
- Some larger format buildings with surface parking
- Individual buildings with parking in front
- Little or no defined sidewalks or pedestrian routes

Medora Street

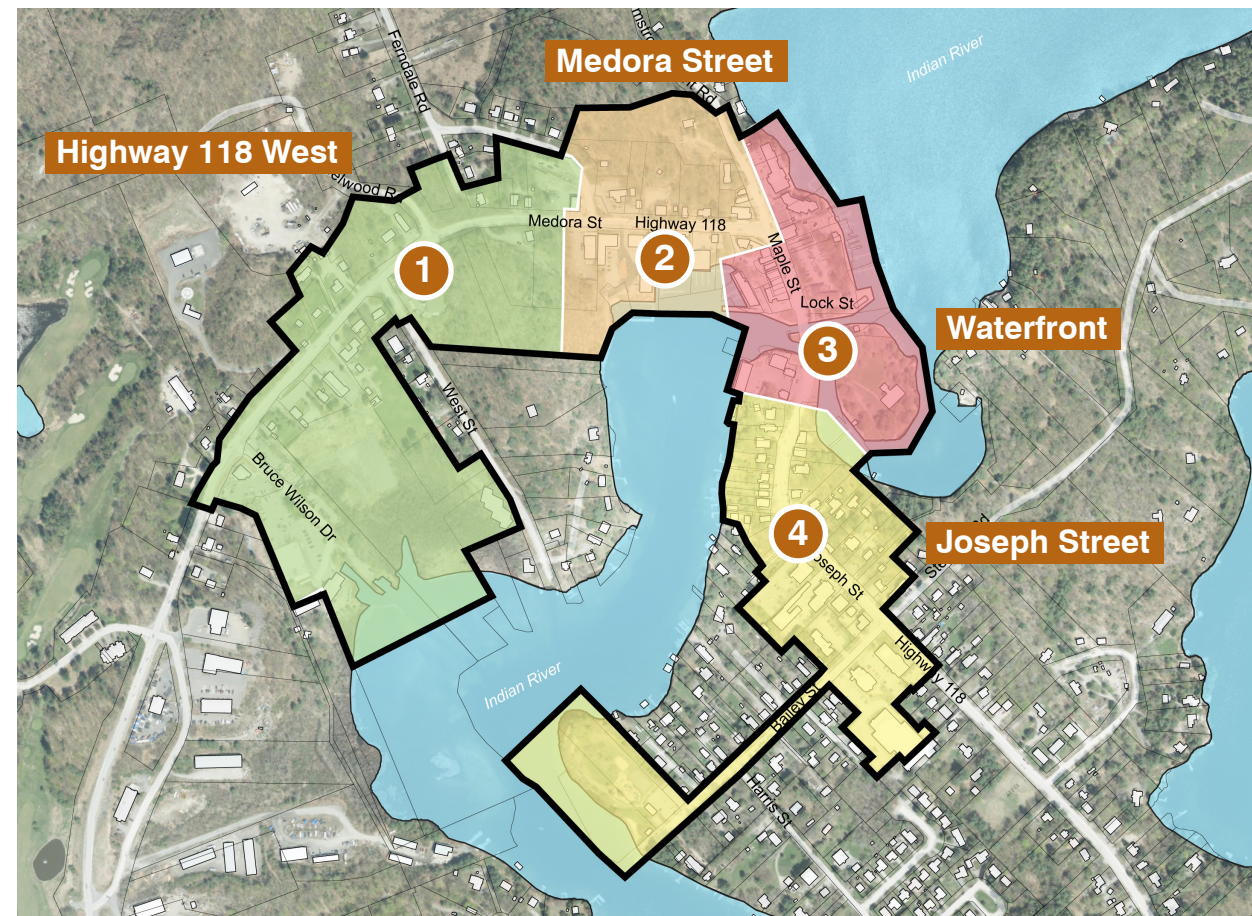
- Cluster of commercial uses with both street and water access
- Large areas of surface parking
- Few sections of defined sidewalk or pedestrian route on the south side
- Sidewalk on the north side

Waterfront

- Core main street commercial on one side of the street
- Site with development opportunity that could complete the street
- Continuous water's edge of Indian River and locks

Joseph Street

- Stand alone buildings set in the landscape
- Key municipal buildings



Bala

Seven segments have been identified in Port Carling as illustrated on the adjacent map.

Highway 169 North

- Larger format retail with surface parking
- Stand alone buildings on the north side
- Limited defined pedestrian route with asphalt path

North Core

- Concentration of commercial uses
- Stand alone buildings
- On street parking
- Sidewalk

Portage

- Small group of commercial buildings
- Separated by bridges on two sides
- Large parking lot on east side

Bala Falls Road

- Concentration of commercial uses on Bala Falls Road
- Stand alone buildings
- On street parking on Bala Falls Road
- Sidewalk next to commercial on Bala Falls Road, asphalt shoulders along highway

Jaspens Park

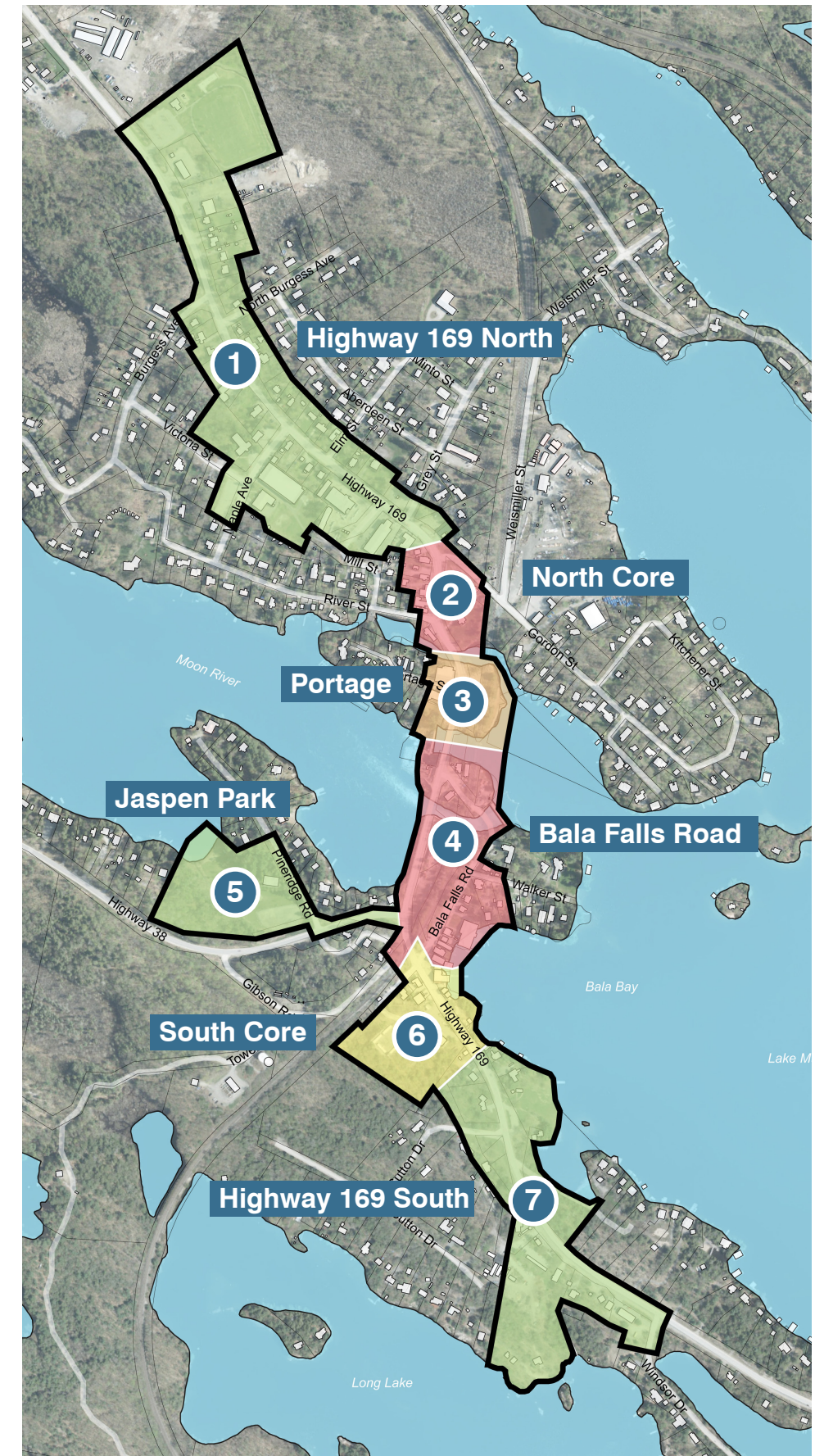
- Residential uses
- Narrow highway with gravel shoulders
- Jaspens Park

South Core

- Defined by crossing underneath railway
- Bala Bay Inn site with waterfront access across the highway

Highway 169 South

- Residential uses and larger sites
- Windsor Park
- Small cluster of stand alone commercial uses on south side towards south end



Defining Compatibility

These Urban Design Guidelines are intended to promote development that is compatible with the characters of Bala and Port Carling. Without being prescriptive about architectural style, the guidelines promote a sense of stylistic unity, respecting the architectural and urban design conventions of Bala and Port Carling, while still allowing for creativity and innovation in individual buildings.

Compatible development means development which may not necessarily be the same as, or similar to, the existing development, but enhances the established community and coexists with existing development without unacceptable adverse impact on the surrounding area.

These guidelines primarily address properties that front on one of the main highways in the urban centre areas of Bala and Port Carling, and are expected to have primarily commercial or mixed use development. Such developments should not necessarily be expected to mimic styles more appropriate for cottages or century old tourist hotels.

Defining a “Muskoka Style” is not meant to restrict the architectural style that can be used, but to assist in understanding the characters of Bala and Port Carling and achieving compatibility for new development.



Example of a new development using Muskoka Style elements in Port Carling

Muskoka Style

Cladding

Much of Muskoka's historic character comes from the preservation and continued use of traditional cladding materials, including brick, clapboard, batten board, shingles and stone. Using these cladding materials on new development helps to ensure the continuation of this character.

Wood Structure

Exposed wood structures and details are common in Muskoka and are particularly evocative of the architectural style of the area. This includes thick beams and posts supporting roofs, gables and overhangs.

Roofs

A variety of pitched roof styles have historically been popular in Muskoka, often broken up with gables. While pitched roofs are generally desired, they are typically only appropriate on buildings up to 3 storeys, and can be limiting on upper storey uses when building heights are restricted.

Colours

Exterior colours popular in Muskoka include earth tones, deep reds, pale blues, white, grey and natural wood tones. In general, brick and stone should be left unpainted to reveal the natural colours of the materials.

Porches and Terraces

Porches, overhangs and terraces are frequently included on buildings as part of a tradition that connects indoor spaces out into the landscape.

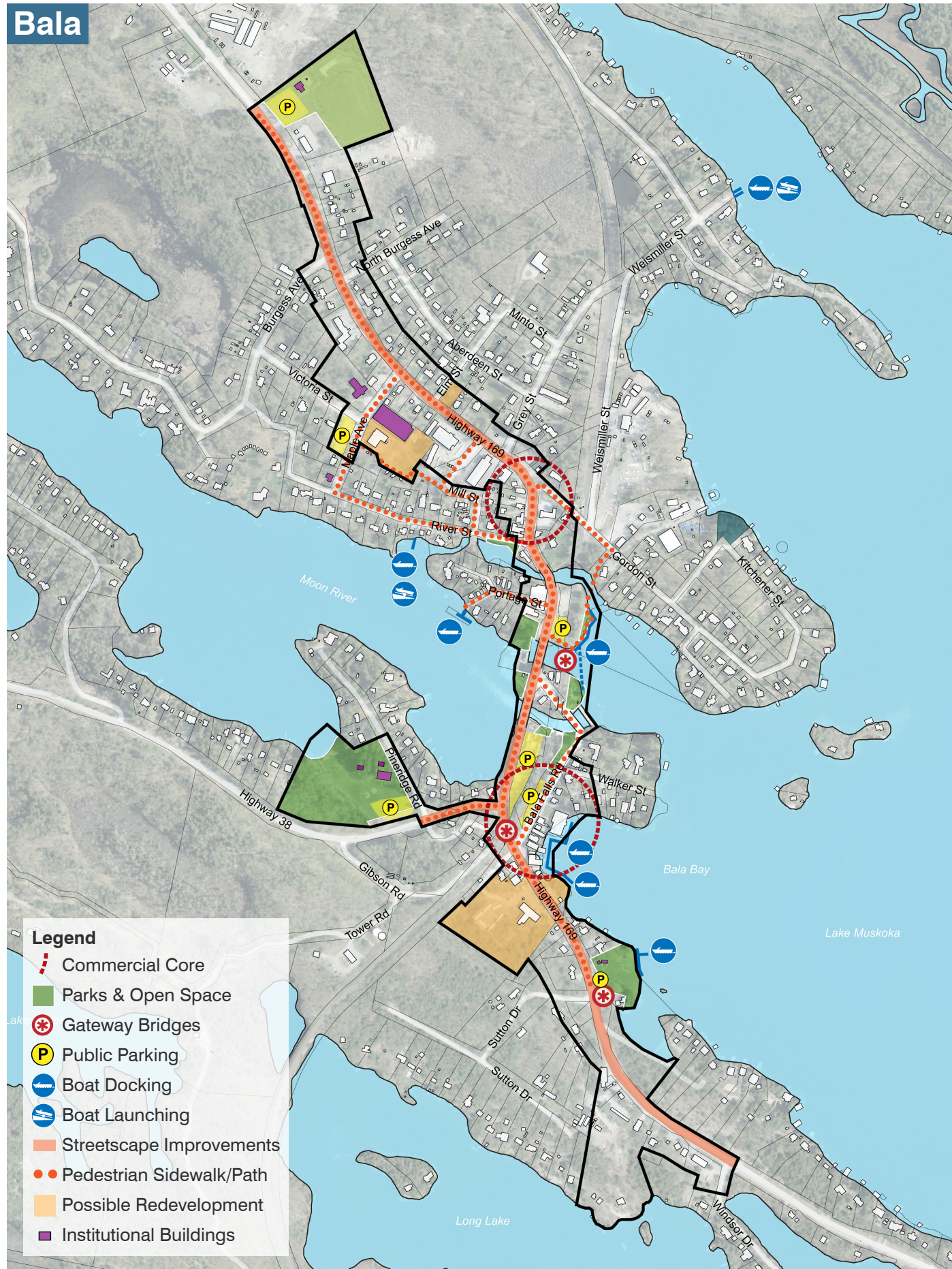
Landscape

Surrounded by the landscape and maintaining views into the landscape is a key characteristic of Muskoka. Areas directly surrounding buildings should be enhanced and landscaped using native plant material to maintain the sense of connection to the wider landscape.



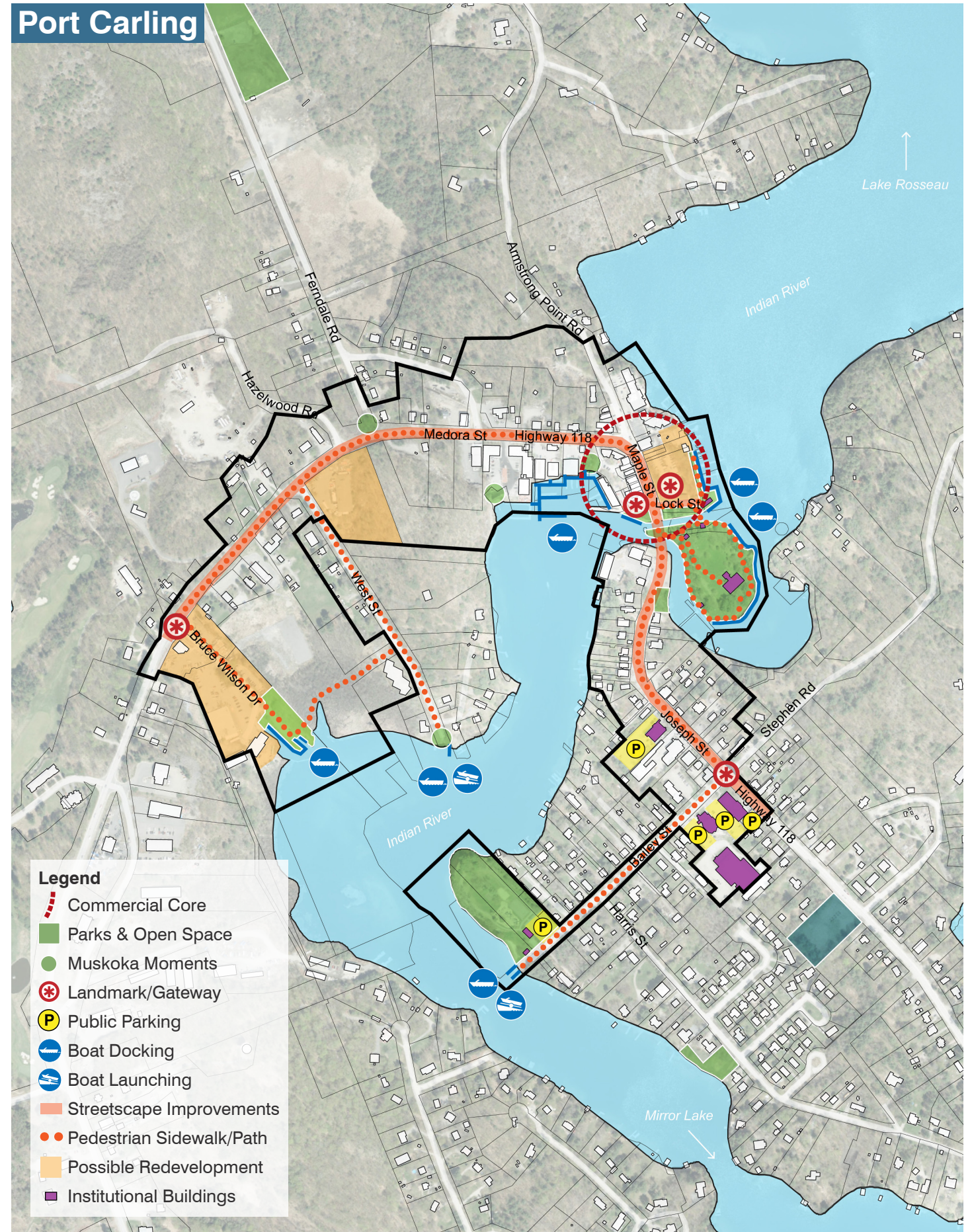
Urban Design Structure Plan

Bala



- Legend**
- - - Commercial Core
 - Parks & Open Space
 - * Gateway Bridges
 - P Public Parking
 - ⊖ Boat Docking
 - ⊕ Boat Launching
 - Streetscape Improvements
 - ⋯ Pedestrian Sidewalk/Path
 - Possible Redevelopment
 - Institutional Buildings

Port Carling



- Legend**
- - - Commercial Core
 - Parks & Open Space
 - Muskoka Moments
 - * Landmark/Gateway
 - P Public Parking
 - ⊖ Boat Docking
 - ⊕ Boat Launching
 - Streetscape Improvements
 - ⋯ Pedestrian Sidewalk/Path
 - Possible Redevelopment
 - Institutional Buildings

The purpose of these Urban Design Guidelines is to provide design guidance for infill and intensification in Bala and Port Carling. The design objective for new developments is primarily to maintain and reinforce the 'small town' and 'human-scaled' character of the area.

While these guidelines are meant to provide design standards and benchmarks for development, they are also meant to provide flexibility within certain parameters, to encourage distinction, variety and creative architectural and design responses.

Site Organization

On larger sites, a well-organized site layout contributes to the ease of access and understandability for visitors, and improves relationships with adjacent properties.

- 1 Provide for appropriate transitions to adjacent properties and different land uses (i.e. setbacks, landscaping, location of servicing and parking areas, pedestrian connections).
- 2 Create a pedestrian-scaled, permeable and connected internal layout (block and street pattern).
- 3 Arrange buildings to create comfortable and protected pedestrian spaces that have a sense of enclosure.
- 4 Integrate existing topography and natural features into the development, and minimize alteration to both, wherever feasible. There are trade offs to be considered in development, particularly when it comes to opportunities to provide housing.
- 5 Enhance wayfinding through site organization by including buildings as gateways and landmarks, public spaces as focal points, and streetscapes that frame significant views.
- 6 Views into the landscape should be maintained and highlighted.
- 7 Larger sites should include significant landscaping to soften built form and build on the character of connection to the landscape.



A recent site plan application in Port Carling

Height & Massing

Building heights play an important role and can impact the character and quality of the street experience. Consistent height and mass of buildings along the street edge ensures visual continuity and maintains the pedestrian scale at the street.

- 8 New buildings should consider and respect the scale, material and massing of adjacent buildings.
- 9 2-storey or 3-storey buildings are encouraged to make more efficient use of buildable land, and to allow for the possibility of residential units on upper floors.
- 10 Divide up larger building masses through architectural articulation, varying setbacks and roof lines.
- 11 The usable area of top floors should not be compromised in order to provide largely decorative roofs and gables. Alternative means of providing articulation and variety of roof line should be explored, or provide flexibility on increased height to accommodate pitched roofs where they are seen as desirable.
- 12 Terraces and decks for residential uses are encouraged on upper levels.
- 13 Taller buildings or building features may be encouraged at strategic locations such as corner sites and other prominent sites to enhance community structure, sense of place and provide landmarks.
- 14 Minimum ground floor heights in non-residential buildings should be 4.5m to allow for flexibility and adaptability for a variety of potential uses.



Unique and articulated massing: library building in Port Carling



Traditional massing: along Joseph Street in Port Carling

Placement & Orientation

Orientation and placement of buildings along the street helps to reinforce the public realm by enhancing the pedestrian environment by creating a sense of enclosure. This is achieved by framing the street with buildings.

- 15** Buildings should be oriented to frame the street edge.
- 16** Buildings should front directly onto public streets and other public spaces, in order to clearly define the public realm and create an attractive and safe pedestrian environment.
- 17** Buildings at corner locations should be sited to address the intersection, with consideration given to both street frontages.
- 18** Buildings should generally be aligned with the setbacks of their neighbours.
- 19** Setbacks from the street should be used for pedestrian access, landscaped areas, additional street tree planting, amenity areas, seating, display areas or sidewalk cafés and patios.



Buildings lining Highway 169 in Bala



Buildings lining Joseph Street/Highway 118 in Port Carling

Street Wall/Facades

Facades are one of the most significant elements of a commercial street. They are the 'first impression' given by businesses to patrons and visitors, and collectively shape the character of the community. The Community Improvement Plan will assist landowners and developers with building the best possible facades in Bala and Port Carling, or improving those that already exist.

- 20** Ground floor of the street wall should be highly transparent, including transparent windows and entrance doors, to establish a strong visual connection between the street and the interior of active ground floor uses.
- 21** Divide up large facades through architectural articulation of the street wall, including the use of fenestration, bands, columns, and other repeated elements.
- 22** Blank walls should not be permitted on any building fronting a street.
- 23** Additional architectural treatment is encouraged for corner sites and landmark buildings to enhance the visual prominence of these buildings and their locations.
- 24** Spaces between buildings (such as alleyways and setbacks) should be well-lit and enhanced through fenestration, side entrances, decorative signage, decorative paving, public art and landscaping.
- 25** Main building entrances should face the street and should be clearly defined with architectural details and easily identifiable within the facade composition.
- 26** Publicly accessible front entrances for stores, offices, and institutional uses must permit barrier-free access and universal accessibility, including both visual and physical accessibility.



Street wall/facades along Highway 169 in Bala



Street wall/facades along Bala Falls Road in Bala



Street wall/facades along Maple Street in Port Carling

Shopfront Signage

Shopfront signage contributes to the quality of individual buildings and the character of the overall streetscape.

- 27** Signage should be located and designed to reflect the heritage character of the streetscape, while allowing for the creativity of individual businesses.
- 28** Diversity in storefront signage should be encouraged to create shopfronts with “personality.”
- 29** Principal commercial signs should be placed above the storefront windows or on canopies over the storefront.
- 30** Secondary signs such as on windows and doors, and signs hanging perpendicular to the building facade should be visually subordinate to the principal sign.
- 31** Movable signs like sandwich board signs are also encouraged but should be located on private property where possible and positioned so as not to impact traffic sight lines.
- 32** Large freestanding signs (such as pylons), roof signs, and large-scale advertising (such as billboards) are discouraged.
- 33** Signage should be attractive, durable, easy to read and complementary to the overall facade design.
- 34** Sign scale should be in proportion with the building and should reflect the pedestrian scale of the streetscape.
- 35** Signs should be located outside the pedestrian right-of-way and, when located over pedestrian areas, should have a minimum clearance of 2.4m from grade.
- 36** Signage should not obscure windows, doors or architectural features.



Signage in front of Duke's Boats building in Port Carling



Signage along Maple Street in Port Carling

Shopfront Awnings, Canopies, Porches and Lighting

Shopfront awnings, canopies and lighting contribute significantly to the character of the overall streetscape.

- 37** Awnings and canopies are encouraged for weather protection and shelter, for additional signage opportunities and for the aesthetic appeal of a facade. Retractable awnings are preferred as they are flexible for diurnal and seasonal changes.
- 38** Awnings and canopies should align with modules of the building's vertical rhythm, such as the space between column or pilaster elements, or the divisions between windows and doors.
- 39** The design, shape, colour and material selected for awnings and canopies should be complementary to the design of the building's facade and should reflect the character of the context.
- 40** Awnings should not obscure windows, entrances or architectural elements on a facade, or impede views down a street.
- 41** Porches should be usable and not simply decorative with a minimum depth of 2m.
- 42** Creative exterior and shop window lighting is encouraged to promote vibrant streetscapes at night, encourage pedestrian traffic and enhance the safety of the pedestrian experience. Lighting must be dark sky friendly.
- 43** Signs should be externally lit. Back-lit or neon signs are prohibited.



Awnings along Maple Street in Port Carling

Access, Loading and Parking

Parking is one of many elements that is needed for retail commercial areas to thrive. The design and location of parking can minimize their visibility, reduce conflicts with pedestrians and help to create a pleasing and inviting environment.

- 44 Minimize the visibility of surface parking areas from the street by placing them to the side or to the rear of buildings.
- 45 Large expanses of surface parking should be broken up with buildings and landscaping to reduce their visual prominence. At least one tree for every 2 stalls is encouraged.
- 46 Provide at least one active frontage containing a high proportion of clear glazing to building edges that face surface parking areas.
- 47 Where existing parking areas are adjacent to the sidewalk, a landscaped area should be located between parking spaces and the sidewalk, providing a clear sight lines at eye level.
- 48 Include pedestrian-scaled lighting, walkways, landscaping, and signage to enhance pedestrian safety, movement and comfort through parking lots to the adjacent sidewalks.
- 49 Ensure parking areas are adequately lit at night. Prohibit light spill from these areas to adjacent residential areas.
- 50 Parking areas should be shared between adjoining facilities.
- 51 Provide multiple entry and exit points from streets to off-street surface parking to reduce congestion.
- 52 Locate service bays, site storage and access points for waste collection out of sight from public spaces, streets and residential areas. Use measures to provide buffers such as appropriate landscaping to reduce the visual impacts on adjoining sensitive uses.

- 53 Lighting of loading and storage areas should be designed so that there is no light that spills, glares or casts over adjacent residential areas.
- 54 To maximize space efficiencies, service and utility areas should be shared between different users within a single building, or, wherever possible, between different buildings.
- 55 Continue to accept cash-in-lieu of parking and consolidate funds to enable the municipality to provide public parking when opportunities arise.



Examples of plantings in parking lots

Pop-Up Retail

Pop-up retail can help increase the variety and vibrancy of the shopping and eating experience in Bala and Port Carling. Local business owners should be encouraged to consider pop-up retail to augment the “bricks and mortar” establishments.

- 56 Design of the pop-up structure should resemble a shed, with wood structure to reflect the Muskoka style.
- 57 Where there are clusters of multiple pop-up retail units, there should be a variety of roof shapes and colours.
- 58 Include planting in pots, furniture such as benches and garbage/recycling receptacles and lighting if the retail will be open in the evening.
- 59 Include a hard walking surface or boardwalk in front of pop-up retail when they are located on permeable surfaces.



Example of portable pop-up retail



Pop-up retail sheds, Western Market, Muskegon, Michigan



Photomontage of pop-up retail in the Precambrian Shield parking lot in Bala

Large Site Guidelines

There are five key large sites that offer particular opportunities for intensification with a mix of uses. Others may also be identified. Guidelines are provided for when and if the landowners want to

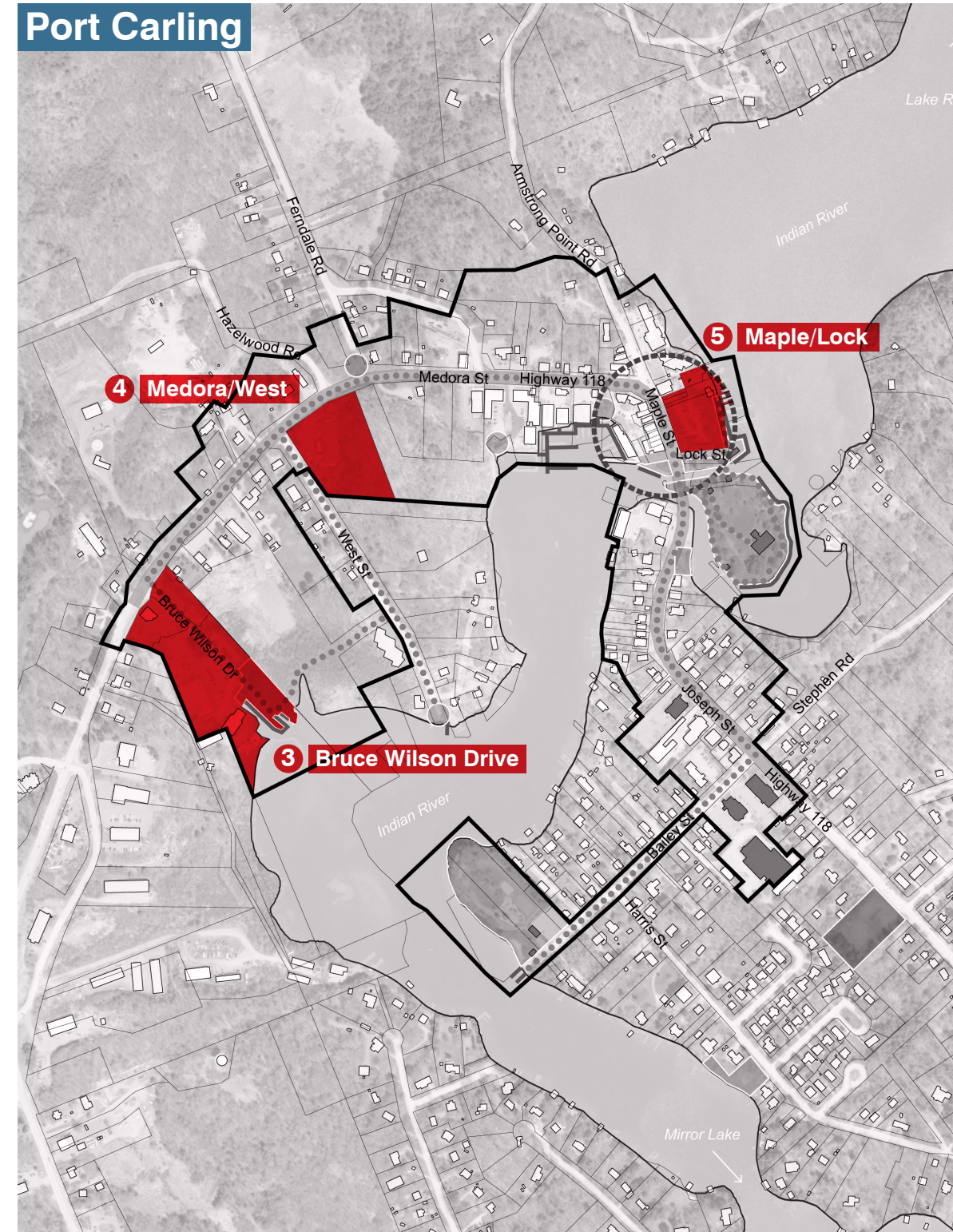
consider redevelopment. These sites offer particular opportunity to provide housing in both Bala and Port Carling.

In order to achieve the infilling and intensification objectives of the Official Plan, District Plan and Provincial Policy Statement, significant site alteration may be required for some properties in

Port Carling. The easily developed lands within this Urban Centre have already been developed, and some of the remaining locations have significant terrain and vegetation.



Location map of the key large sites in Bala



Location map of the key large sites in Port Carling

1 Bala Legion Site in Bala

Context

The site is located on a parcel that includes the Bala Legion building on the east side of Maple Avenue and wraps around the Bala Arena. Apart from the Bala Legion building the site is primarily vacant. The site slopes down from behind the Bala Legion building to Mill Street. There is potential for access to the Mill Street right-of-way to the east. There is a proposal to build a 3-5 storey senior's residence with 128 units on the site.

Site Organization

Area A

- 1 Connect the existing Bala Legion building to new development.
- 2 Preserve the space in front of the Legion building for events.
- 3 Consider replacing the Bala Legion building and integrating its uses into the new development. This would be potentially allow for additional useable floor area above the Bala Legion uses and provide a front door/address on Maple Avenue.



Area B

- 4 The main concentration of new development is expected in this area.
- 5 Parking should be integrated into the building wherever possible. The site's grading makes this an efficient option.
- 6 If at grade exterior parking is provided, it should be designed like a pedestrian-friendly mews.
- 7 Enclosed at grade parking areas facing Mill Street should be sleeved with active uses or otherwise activated or beautified.

Area C

- 8 Provide a landscaped amenity area/walkway through this area. If at grade parking is provided, it should be designed like a pedestrian-friendly mews.

Legend

-  Main Vehicular Access
-  Pedestrian Access/Permeability



Conceptual organization plan of the Bala Legion site in Bala

Built Form

Area B

- 9 Buildings should be a minimum of 3 storeys.

Access

- 10 Main vehicular access should be provided from Mill Street, with an additional access from Maple Avenue.
- 11 A pedestrian connection should be provided from Mill Street to Maple Avenue.

Landscape

- 12 At grade parking areas should be landscaped.

General guidelines for height, massing, street wall/facades, shopfront signage, awnings/canopies and lighting, access, loading and parking also apply.

2 Bala Bay Inn Site in Bala

Context

The Bala Bay Inn (former Swastika Hotel) is a listed heritage building, was built in 1912, and was the first brick hotel built in Muskoka. The property is 6.7 acres (2.7 hectares) and includes a small waterfront parcel on Bala Bay. Apart from the hotel itself, the site is largely undeveloped and currently has several portable units used for temporary housing for workers.

Site Organization

Area A

- 1 Consider appropriate context-sensitive expansions to the Bala Bay Inn building.

Area B

- 2 Consider converting the space in front of the Bala Bay Inn into a landscape pedestrian space suitable for events.

Area C

- 3 Provide a landscaped public waterfront access through this area. Views through to the water should be maintained through vegetation management.

Area D

- 4 The main concentration of new development is expected in this area.
- 5 If at grade parking is provided, it should be landscaped.

Built Form

Area A

- 6 Buildings in area A should not exceed the height of the Bala Bay Inn.
- 7 Buildings to either side could push forwards toward Highway 169, framing the heritage building.
- 8 Commercial uses should be concentrated in area A.
- 9 Provide a landmark element with high visibility from Highway 169.

Area D

- 10 Buildings should be a minimum of 2 storeys.

Legend

- * Landmark Element
- Built Form Edge - Street Wall
- Built Form Edge - Waterfront
- Main Vehicular Access
- > Pedestrian Access/Permeability



Conceptual organization plan of the Bala Bay Inn site in Bala

Access

- 11 Main vehicular access should be provided from Highway 169, with an additional access from Mushquash Road.

- 12 Pedestrian access should be provided to the water's edge in Area C.

Landscape

- 13 At grade parking areas should be landscaped.

General guidelines for height, massing, street wall/facades, shopfront signage, awnings/canopies and lighting, access, loading and parking also apply.

3 Bruce Wilson Drive Site in Port Carling

Context

The site is located along Medora Street/Highway 118 at Bruce Wilson Drive. The site stretches all the way down to the Indian River and currently contains a variety of commercial uses, including a Subway and a former Tim Hortons, a Foodland grocery store, a furniture store, and a small bakery/health food store. The flood hazard line affects a significant part of the site near the Indian River (areas C and D).

Site Organization

Area A

- 1 The built form should create a street wall along the edges of Medora Street and Bruce Wilson Drive.

Area B

- 2 The main concentration of new development is expected in this area, and may include at grade parking.
- 3 The built form in Area B has the potential to address the waterfront.

Area C

- 4 The Flood Hazard affects part of this area, and it is likely to remain a parking area.

Area D

- 5 Public access and a public waterfront/boardwalk should be provided along the water's edge.
- 6 Docks should be provided for public boat tie-up.

Built Form

Area A

- 7 Buildings should be a minimum of 2 storeys with retail/commercial uses at grade.
- 8 A landmark element should be created at the corner of Medora Street and Bruce Wilson Drive.
- 9 Above 2 storeys, a setback of minimum 1.5 metres should be provided.

Legend

- * Landmark Element
- Built Form Edge - Street Wall
- Built Form Edge - Suggestion
- Main Vehicular Access
- > Pedestrian Access/Permeability



Conceptual organization plan of the Bruce Wilson Drive site in Port Carling

Area B

- 10 Continue the street wall down Bruce Wilson Drive, and facing the waterfront where possible.
- 11 A landmark element that is visible from the Indian River should be created close to the bottom of Bruce Wilson Drive.
- 12 Buildings should be a minimum of 2 storeys with retail/commercial uses at grade.
- 13 Consider "sleeving" large format retail with street-facing small retail units, displays, pop-up retail locations, or other active uses.
- 14 Residential uses should be integrated where possible.

Access

- 15 Main access will be provided from Bruce Wilson Drive.
- 16 Provide pedestrian access to the waterfront and connect to potential trail to the east.

Landscape

- 17 Bruce Wilson Drive should be treated as a public street, including sidewalks on both sides, and lined with street trees.
- 18 At grade parking areas should be landscaped.

General guidelines for height, massing, street wall/facades, shopfront signage, awnings/canopies and lighting, access, loading and parking also apply.

4 Medora Street/West Street Site in Port Carling

Context

The site is located along Medora Street/Highway 118 at West Street. The property is 3.4 acres (1.4 hectares) and is currently home to the Indian River Trading sporting goods store. The remainder of the site is largely covered in trees. There is a significant slope down West Street towards the Indian River, and the site also sits relatively high above Medora Street/Highway 118.

Site Organization

Area A

- 1 Commercial/mixed use development should create a street wall along the edges of Medora and West Streets.
- 2 Setbacks may be required to handle the grade difference along Medora Street.

Area B

- 3 Lower intensity/residential uses are appropriate in this area.

Area C

- 4 Residential development may be appropriate in this area, however trade offs resulting from the alteration to the terrain and tree removal will have to be considered.
- 5 At grade parking may be provided in this area, behind the street-fronting buildings in Areas A and B.

Area D

- 6 Consider protecting the trees and landscape in this area - it includes thick vegetation, slopes and currently forms a gateway to the lower part of Medora Street (along with the trees on the neighbouring property).

Built Form

Area A

- 7 Buildings should be a minimum of 2 storeys with retail/commercial uses at grade.
- 8 A landmark element should be created at the corner of Medora and West Streets.
- 9 Above 2 storeys, a stepback of minimum 1.5 metres should be provided.

Legend

- * Landmark Element
- Built Form Edge - Street Wall
- - - Built Form Edge - Suggestion
- Main Vehicular Access
- - - Pedestrian Access/Permeability



Conceptual organization plan of the Medora Street/West Street site in Port Carling

Area B

- 10 Continue the street wall down West Street.
- 11 Buildings should be a minimum of 2 storeys.

Access

- 12 Main access will be provided from West Street.
- 13 Provide a pedestrian access from Medora Street.

Landscape

- 14 At grade parking areas should be landscaped.

General guidelines for height, massing, street wall/facades, shopfront signage, awnings/canopies and lighting, access, loading and parking also apply.

5 Maple Street/Lock Street Site in Port Carling

Context

The site is a large waterfront site located in downtown Port Carling on the east side of Maple Street (Highway 118), north of the locks. Current uses include a large at-grade parking lot and some retail commercial uses along Lock Street. The Boatworks directly faces the waterfront. The site is currently used for public parking, The Boatworks and commercial uses. There is a significant grade change from the water to the top of the site. This site is a significant opportunity to have an impact on the overall character and strength of downtown Port Carling by completing the east side of Maple Street to establish a two-sided main street.

Site Organization

Area A

- 1 The built form should create a street wall along the edges of Maple Street and Lock Street, with allowance for pedestrian access into the site and some separation between individual buildings.

Area B

- 2 If at grade parking is provided, it should be designed like a pedestrian-friendly mews, be faced with active uses, and be capable of being used for events and festivals.
- 3 Views to the water should be provided from the central area of the site.

Area C

- 4 The built form in Area C should address the waterfront.
- 5 Views and access should be provided through Area C down to the waterfront.

Area D

- 6 A public waterfront/boardwalk should be provided along the water's edge.
- 7 The grade transition to the upper level of the site should be landscaped and planted or terraced rather than blank retaining walls.
- 8 The waterfront/boardwalk should be landscaped with appropriate paving, planting, furniture and lighting.

Legend

- * Landmark Element
- Built Form Edge - Street Wall
- Built Form Edge - Waterfront
- Main Vehicular Access
- > Pedestrian Access/Permeability



Conceptual organization plan of the Maple Street/Lock Street site in Port Carling



Street wall of the main street buildings on the west side of Maple Street

Built Form

Area A

- 9 Buildings facing Maple Street should be a minimum of 2 storeys with retail/commercial uses at grade.
- 10 A landmark element should be created at the corner of Maple and Lock Streets.
- 11 Above 2 storeys, a setback of minimum 1.5 metres should be provided.

Area C

- 12 The built form should be highly articulated and differentiated, with particular attention paid to the roofline and roof elements.
- 13 Balconies facing the waterfront should be encouraged.
- 14 A landmark element should be created at the bottom of Lock Street.
- 15 A key landmark/destination element should be created at the north end of Area C.

Area D

- 16 Retail/commercial uses at the waterfront level should be encouraged where possible.

Access

- 17 Main vehicular access should be provided at the north end of the site.
- 18 Permeability for pedestrian access through the site and down to the waterfront should be provided.
- 19 Public access should be provided along the water's edge.

Landscape

- 20 At grade parking areas should be landscaped.
- 21 Trees should be planted along Maple Street.

General guidelines for height, massing, street wall/facades, shopfront signage, awnings/canopies and lighting, access, loading and parking also apply.

This section provides direction for streets and parks building on the concepts and built work from previous streetscape improvements in Bala and Port Carling.

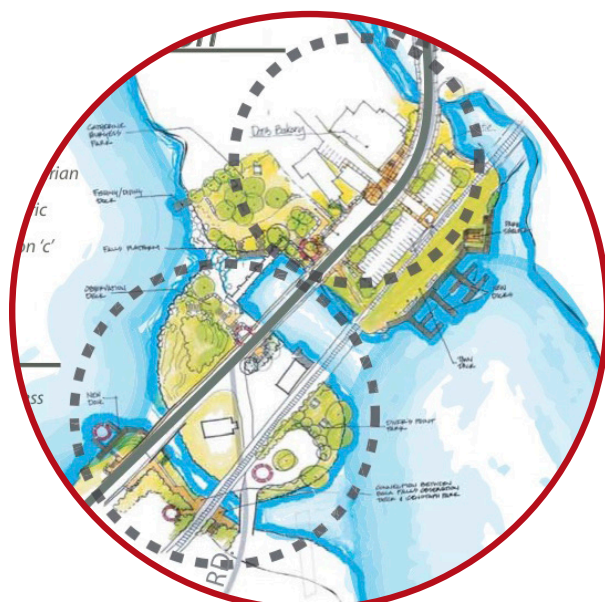
Street typologies are included for various segments of the streets. Illustrations provide a demonstration of new conditions with a priority placed on safe pedestrian access and enhanced landscape conditions through the Urban Centres.

Previous Streetscape Improvements

Streetscape improvements were implemented on Highway 169 north of the bridge and on Bala Falls Road and included enhancements to parking, addition of sidewalks, lighting and planting.

Bala

Bala Streetscape & Parking Improvement Plan (2008)

Streetscape Improvements (2008) - Highway 169 between Gordon St and River St



Streetscape Improvements (2008) - Bala Falls Road



Port Carling

Streetscape improvements were implemented in Port Carling on Medora Street and Maple Street. The District is currently preparing an Environmental Assessment for Highway 169 between Lock Street and Armstrong Road. A number of options are being evaluated.

Streetscape improvements were implemented in Port Carling based on the Streetscape Master Plan completed in 2006 and included terraced rock retaining walls, lighting, planting and re-organization of parking.

Port Carling Streetscape Master Plan (2006)



Medora Street Improvements (2009)



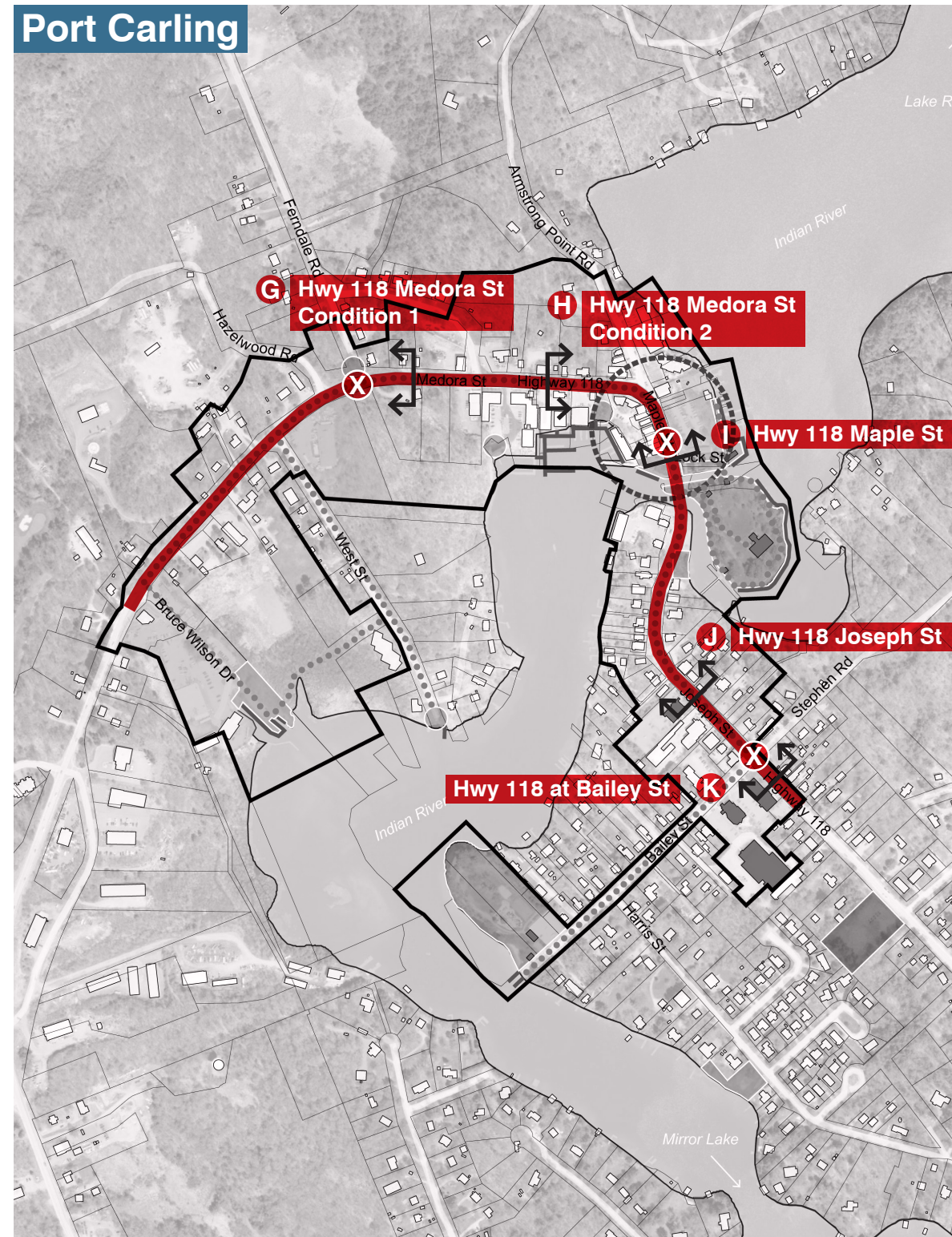
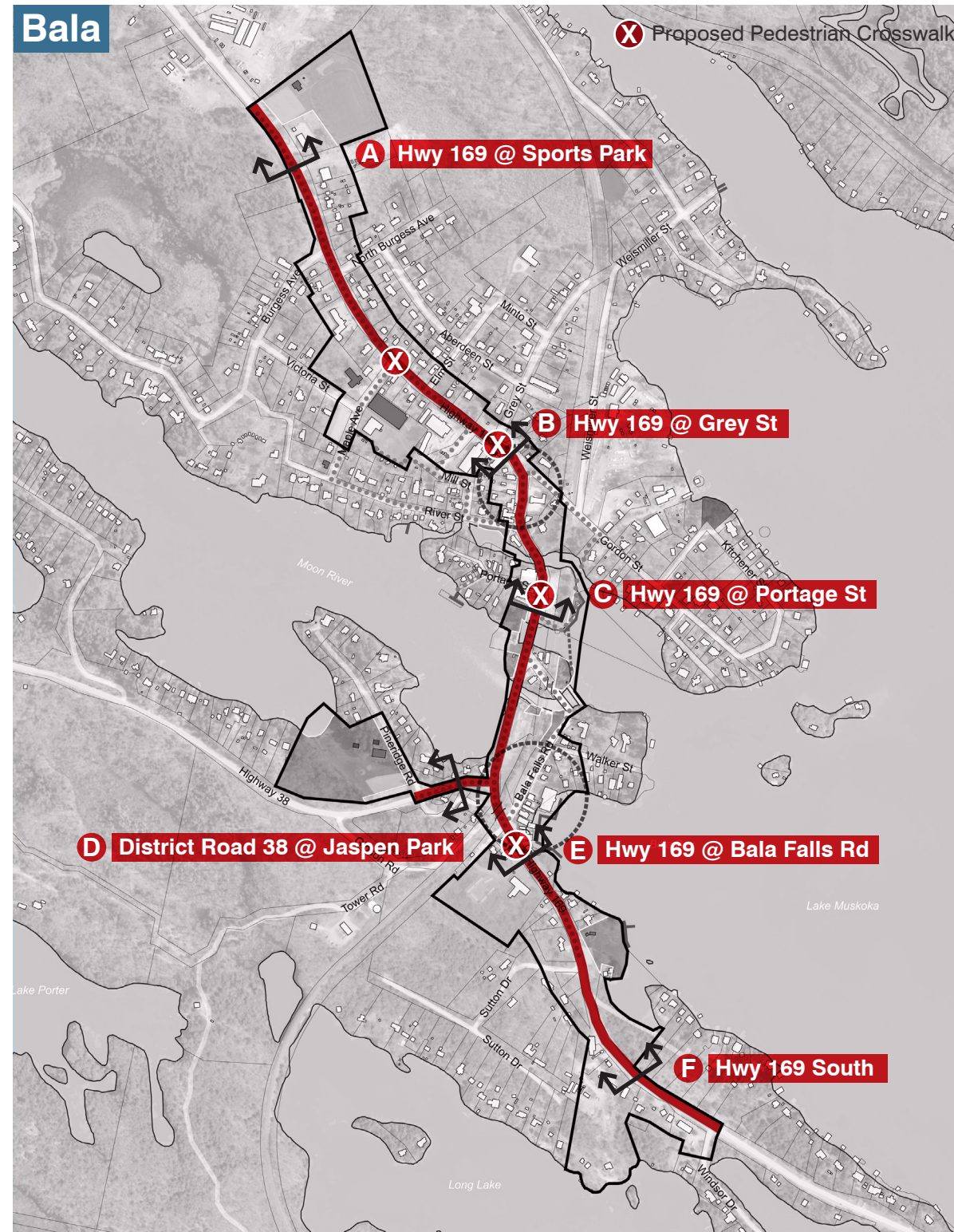
Maple Street Improvements (2009)



Proposed Street Conditions

A number of streetscape typologies provide direction for detailed planning and design that will be undertaken in the future as part of the District's plans for Highway 118 in Port Carling and other

initiatives on Highways 169 and 38. The final location of crosswalks will be confirmed through discussions with the District.



Bala

A Highway 169 at Muskoka Lakes Sports Park

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

Sidewalk

A new sidewalk is proposed on the east side of Highway 169, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

No crosswalks are proposed in this area.

Site Furnishings

Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Highway 169 at Muskoka Lakes Sports Park



B Highway 169 Bridge at Grey Street

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

Sidewalk

New sidewalks are proposed on both sides of Highway 169, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways, parking areas, and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

A pedestrian-activated crosswalk is proposed across Highway 169 at Grey Street. The crosswalk should be highly visible, include warning lights when activated, and meet all requirements of the District Municipality of Muskoka and the Highway Traffic Act.

Site Furnishings

Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Highway 169 Bridge North of Portage Street



C Highway 169 Bridge at Portage Street

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

Sidewalk

New sidewalks are proposed on both sides of Highway 169, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways, parking areas, and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

A pedestrian-activated crosswalk is proposed across Highway 169 at Portage Street. The crosswalk should be highly visible, include warning lights when activated, and meet all requirements of the District Municipality of Muskoka and the Highway Traffic Act.

Site Furnishings

Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Highway 169 Bridge North of Portage Street



D District Road 38 towards Jaspén Park

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

Sidewalk

A new sidewalk is proposed on the north side of District Road 38 leading towards Pine Ridge Road and Jaspén Park, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

No crosswalks are proposed in this area.

Site Furnishings

Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Highway 38 towards Jaspén Park



E Highway 169 at Bala Falls Road

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees and plantings should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

Sidewalk

New sidewalks are proposed on both sides of Highway 169, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways, parking areas, and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

A pedestrian-activated crosswalk is proposed across Highway 169 at Bala Falls Road and Musquash Road. The crosswalk should be highly visible, include warning lights when activated, and meet all requirements of the District Municipality of Muskoka and the Highway Traffic Act.

Site Furnishings

Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Highway 169 at Bala Falls Road



F South End of Highway 169

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees and plantings should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

Sidewalk

A new sidewalk is proposed on the west side of Highway 169, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

No crosswalks are proposed in this area.

Site Furnishings

Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to the south end of Highway 169



2.1m min. clearway

gravel shoulder

Port Carling

G Medora Street (Highway 118) - Condition 1

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees and plantings should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

On-street parking on both sides of Medora Street should be removed through this area to provide sidewalks on both sides. Consider including bollards to slow traffic coming over the hill and protect the sidewalks from attempts to park/stop vehicles.

Sidewalk

New sidewalks are proposed on both sides of Medora Street, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).

- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways, parking areas, and access roads that are not public streets.
- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

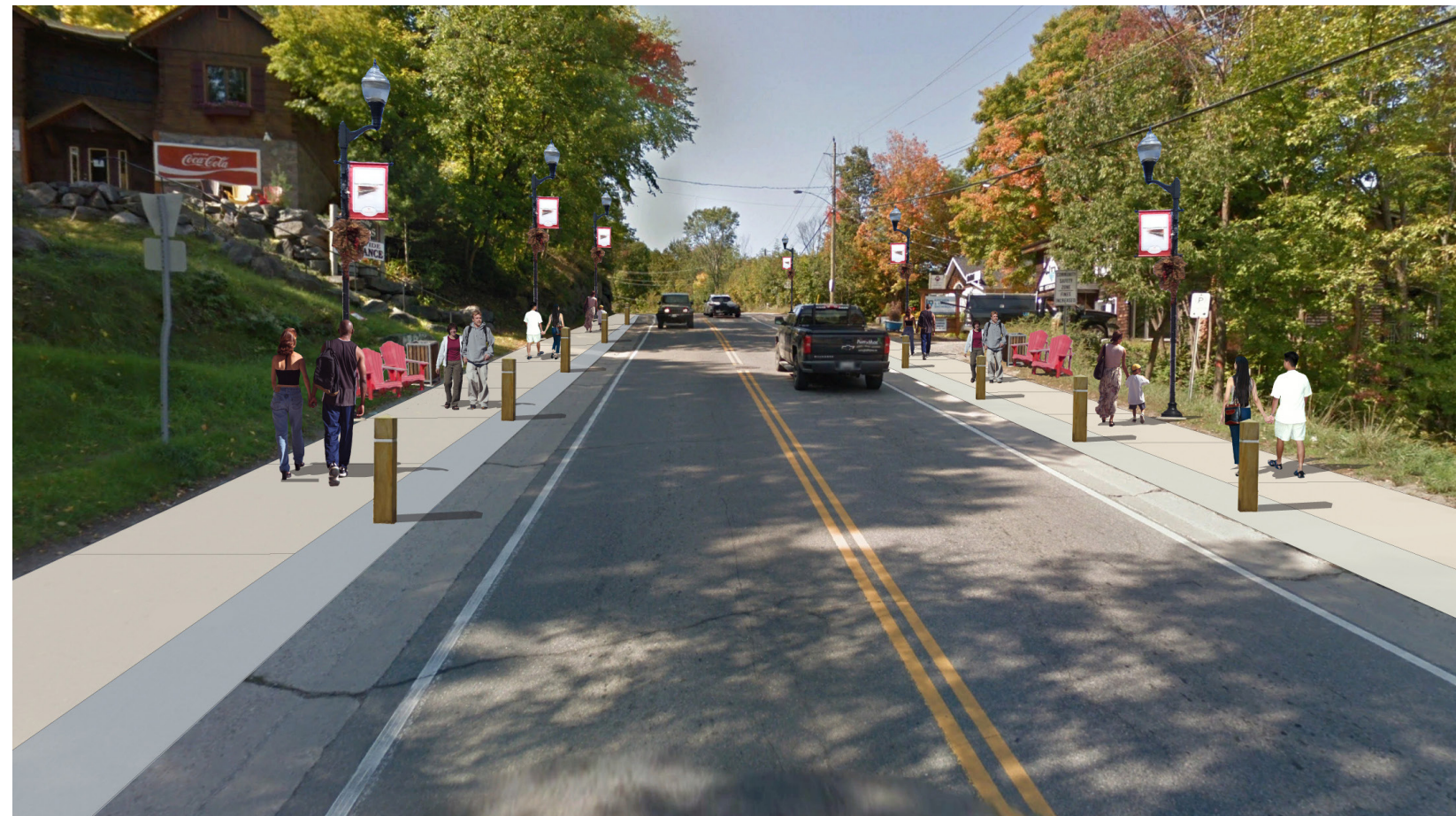
No crosswalks are proposed in this area.

Site Furnishings

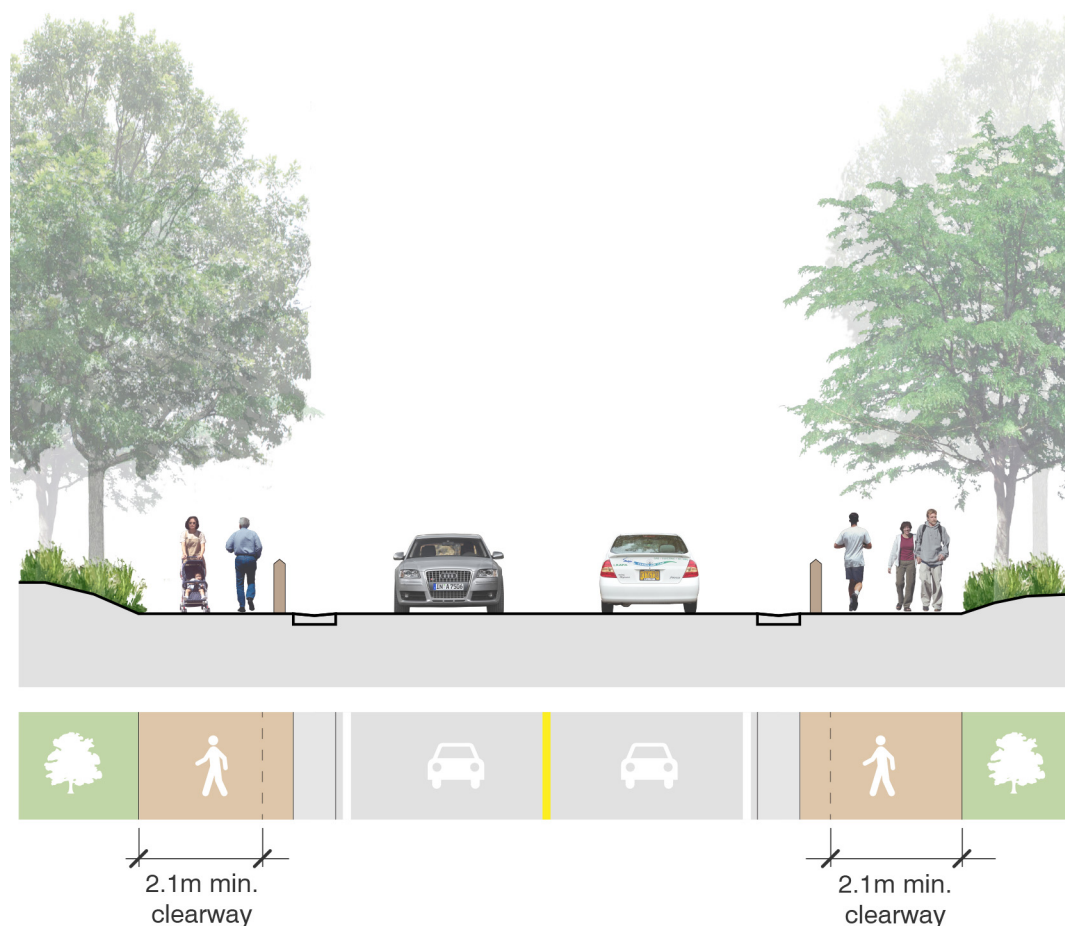
Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Medora Street (Highway 118) - Condition 1



H Medora Street (Highway 118) - Condition 2

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees and plantings should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

On-street parking on the south side of Medora Street should be narrowed to be a maximum of 2.25 metres to provide space for a new sidewalk. Where space is too limited to accommodate both, on-street parking should be removed.

Sidewalk

A new sidewalk is proposed on the south side of Medora Street, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).

- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways, parking areas, and access roads that are not public streets.
- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

No crosswalks are proposed in this area.

Site Furnishings

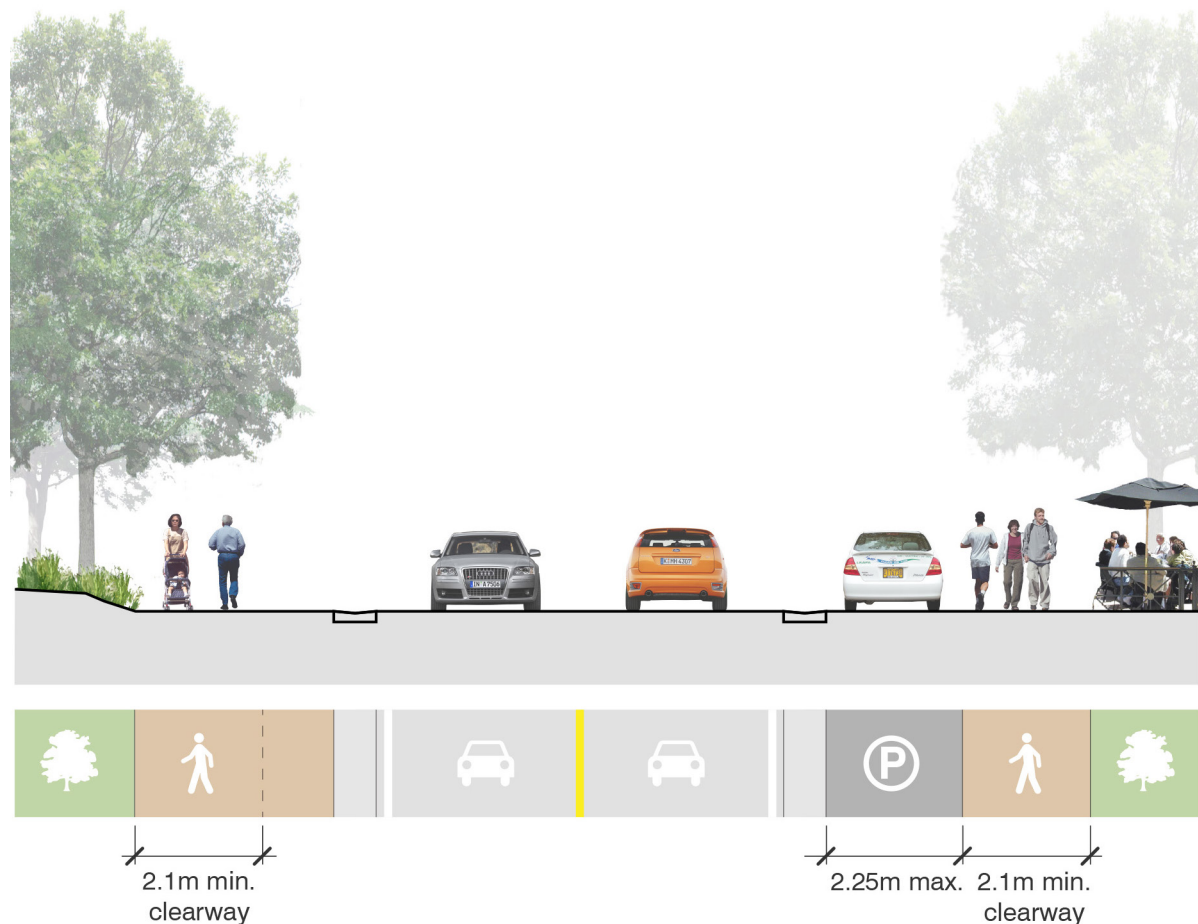
Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Medora Street (Highway 118) - Condition 2



I Maple Street (Highway 118)

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees and plantings should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

On-street parking on the east side of Maple Street is proposed to be converted into parallel (lay-by) parking to provide space for a new sidewalk.

Sidewalk

A new sidewalk is proposed on the east side of Maple Street, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways, parking areas, and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

A pedestrian-activated crosswalk is proposed across Maple Street/Highway 118 at James Bartleman Way/Lock Street. The crosswalk should be highly visible, include warning lights when activated, and meet all requirements of the District Municipality of Muskoka and the Highway Traffic Act.

Site Furnishings

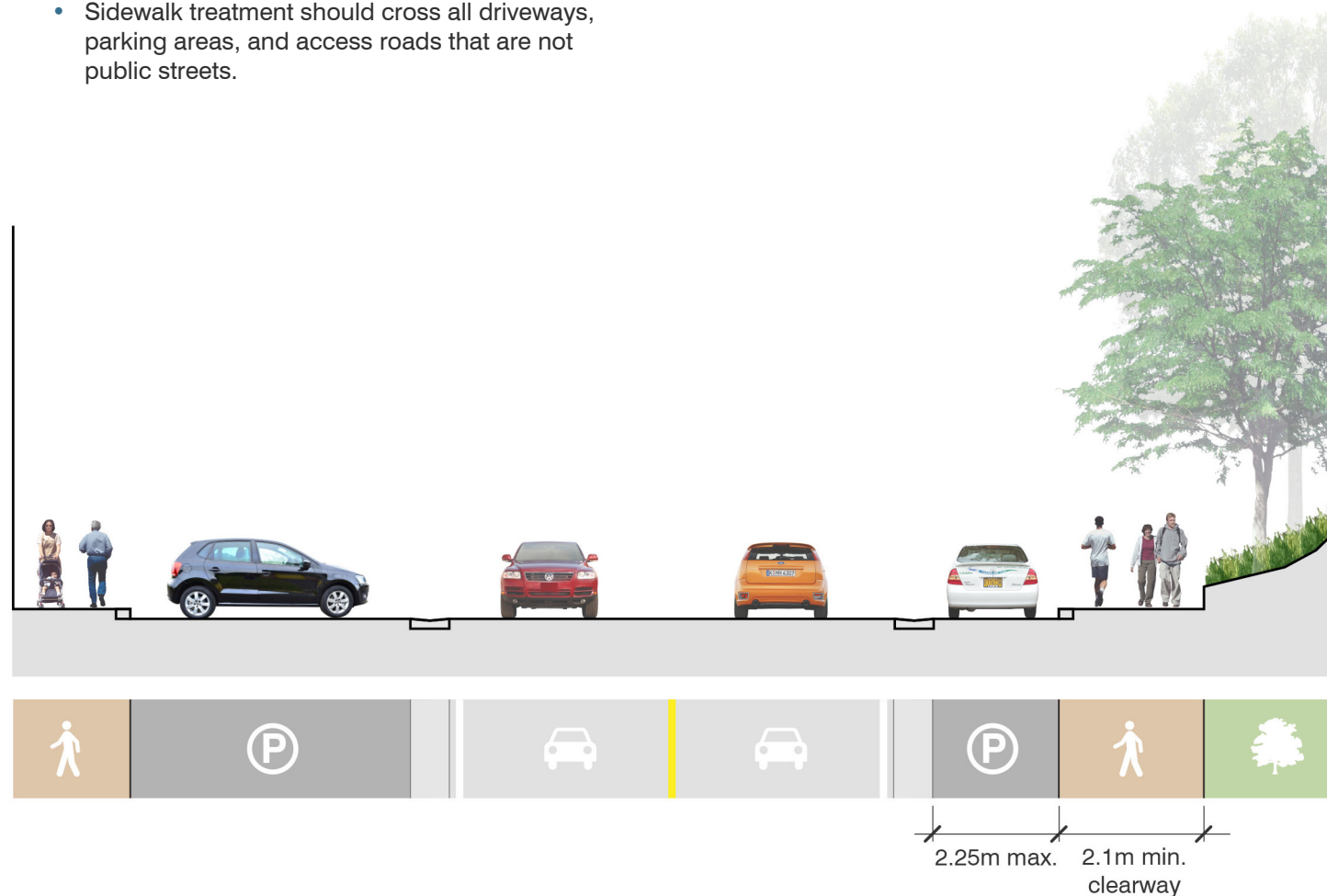
Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Maple Street (Highway 118)



J Joseph Street (Highway 118)

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees and plantings should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

Sidewalk

The existing sidewalk on the north/east side of Joseph Street should be widened where possible. A new sidewalk is proposed on the south/west side of Joseph Street, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways, parking areas, and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

No crosswalks are proposed in this area.

Site Furnishings

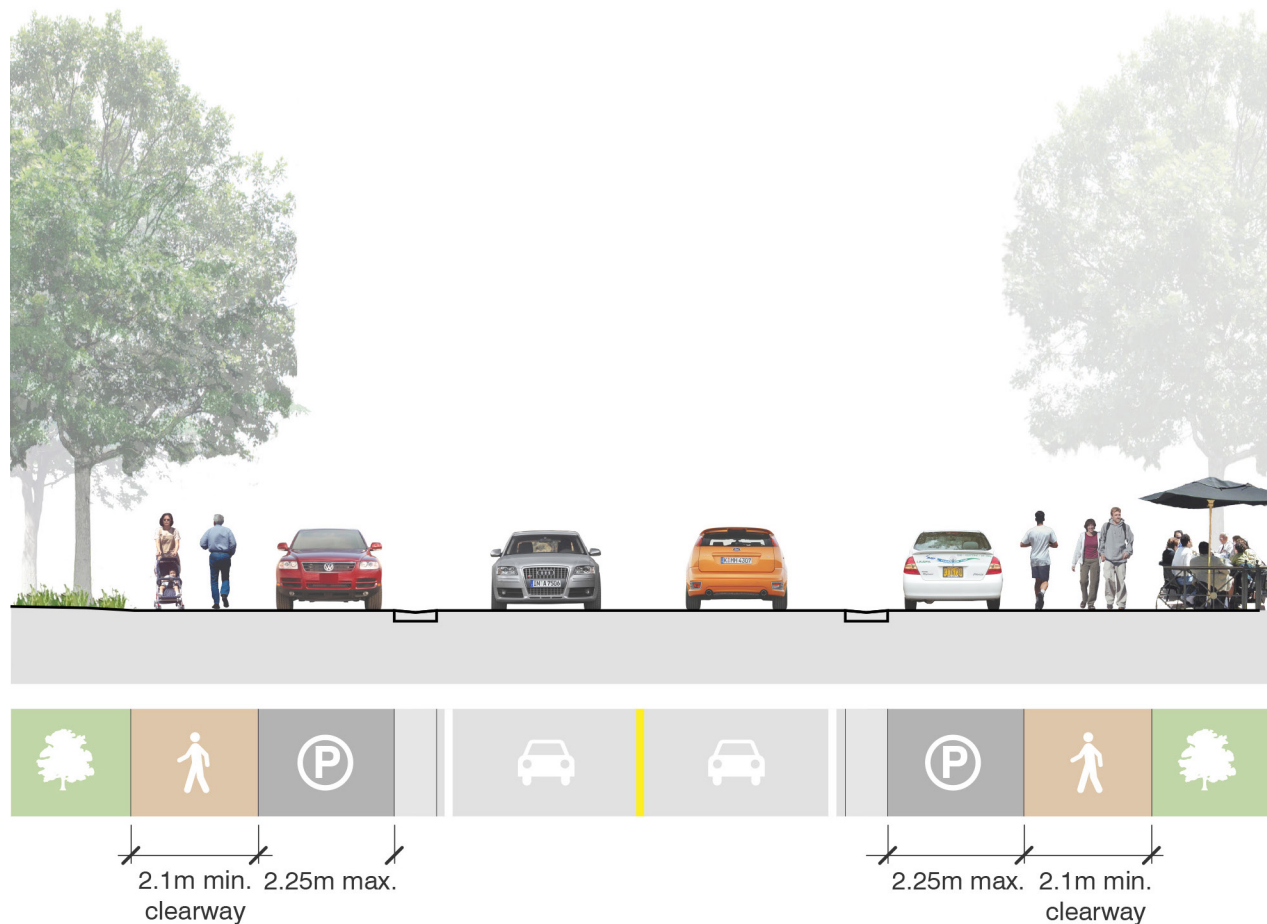
Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.



Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Joseph Street (Highway 118)



K Joseph Street (Highway 118) at Bailey Street

Travel Lanes

No change is proposed to travel lane widths.

Streetscape

Additional trees and plantings should be added on private property wherever possible in consultation with adjacent owners.

Sidewalk

The existing sidewalk on the north/east side of Joseph Street should be widened where possible. A new sidewalk is proposed on the south side of Joseph Street, subject to the following guidelines:

- Sidewalk should have a minimum clearway of 2.1 metres (wherever possible).
- Sidewalk material should be differentiated from the road surface material.
- Sidewalk treatment should cross all driveways, parking areas, and access roads that are not public streets.

- At intersections with public streets and highways pedestrian crossing lines should be painted across the intersection.

Crosswalks

A pedestrian-activated crosswalk is proposed across Joseph Street/Highway 118 at Bailey Street/Stephen Road (not visible in illustration at right). The crosswalk should be highly visible, include warning lights when activated, and meet all requirements of the District Municipality of Muskoka and the Highway Traffic Act.

Site Furnishings

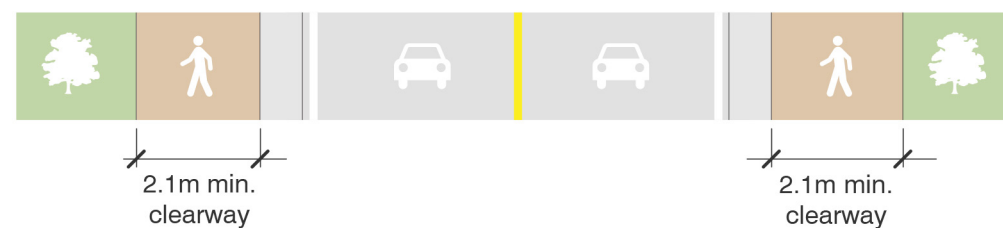
Muskoka chairs, benches and waste receptacles should be added.

Dark Sky Friendly Lighting

Dark sky friendly pedestrian scale lighting should be added.

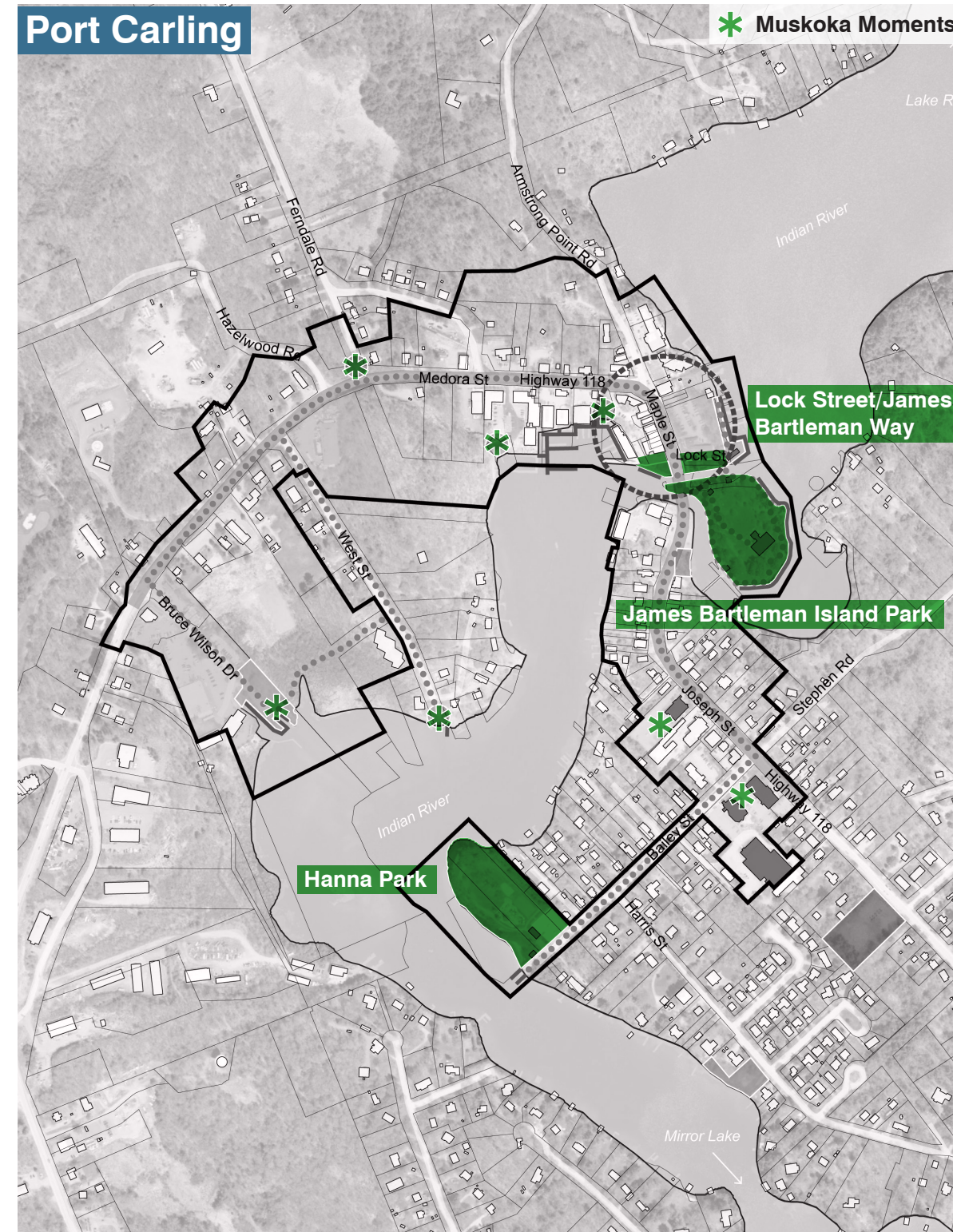


Photomontage illustrating proposed improvement to Joseph Street (Highway 118) at Bailey Street



Public Park Guidelines

The public park guidelines provide direction for enhancements to the key public spaces in Bala and Port Carling. The guidelines also suggest the location of Muskoka Moments.



Bala

Muskoka Lakes Sports Park

- Augment existing play facilities, skateboard park, parking, walking track and sports fields.
- Provide year round washrooms.
- Consider additional recreation facilities such as splash pad, games tables, pickle ball court, exercise stations, skating trail.
- Locate an Information Map for orientation to Bala and its businesses and other attractions.
- Provide a bike station.

Jaspén Park

- Augment existing swimming, play facilities, parking, changeroom and picnic pavilion.
- Provide year round washrooms.
- Consider additional recreation facilities such as exercise stations and beach volleyball.
- Locate an Information Map for orientation to Bala and its businesses and other attractions.

Windsor Park

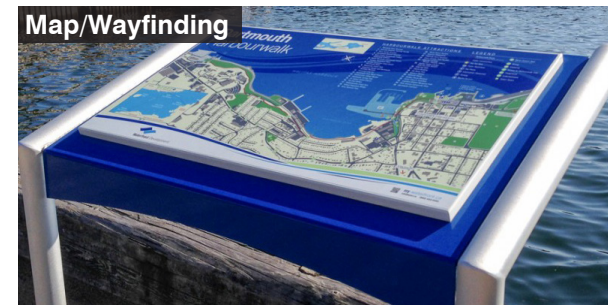
- Augment existing boat tie up, swimming and parking.
- Provide year round washrooms.
- Consider additional recreation facilities such as games tables and exercise stations.
- Update the Information Map for orientation to Bala and its businesses and other attractions.

Muskoka Moments

- Provide a series of resting stops along a walking and cycling route.
- Include Interpretive signage and Information Map, locate “you are here”, nearby restaurants, cafes, interesting sites.
- Provide seating and planting/landscape features.
- Accommodate winter activities.
- Provide bike stations at key locations.



Bike Station



Map/Wayfinding



Exercise Station



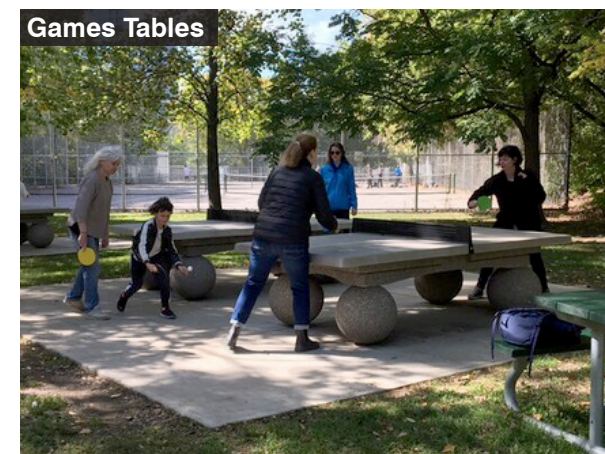
Seating



Skating Trail



Beach Volleyball



Games Tables



Signage/Wayfinding

Port Carling

Lock Street/James Bartleman Way

- Create a summer pedestrian-only space on James Bartleman Way in front of the mural and on Lock Street.
- Include special paving materials, tables and seating.
- Include planting/landscape features.
- Include a bike station.
- Include an Information Map for orientation to Port Carling, its businesses and attractions

James Bartleman Island Park

- Augment existing boat tie up and seating.
- Consider adding recreation facilities such as a playground, games tables and exercise stations.
- Consider adding an outdoor pavilion.
- Consider adding year round washrooms.
- Include an Information Map for orientation to Port Carling, its businesses and attractions

Hanna Park

- Augment existing boat tie up, swimming, playground, skating trail and parking.
- additional recreation facilities such as games tables and exercise stations.
- Provide rear round washrooms.
- Include an Information Map for orientation to Port Carling, its businesses and attractions.
- Include a bike station.

Muskoka Moments

- Include Interpretive signage and Information Map, locate “you are here”, nearby restaurants, cafes, interesting sites.
- Provide seating and planting/landscape features.
- Accommodate winter activities.
- Provide bike stations at key locations.



Photomontage of pedestrian-only space on James Bartleman Way



Elements to include in the Muskoka Moments



Illustration of the potential components of a Muskoka Moment

Considerations for Implementation

There are many influences on determining the implementation of improvements in Bala or Port Carling. There may be opportunities presented to “piggy back” with other capital projects of the District or Township, choices made in response to specific funding programs, a strategy to ‘sprinkle’ improvements across both urban centre, a strategy to focus on one or two key areas. Staff and Council will consider all of the variables and influences when making decisions on projects to implement.

Possibilities for immediate implementation include:

1. Bike racks/bike stations;
2. Signage and wayfinding;
3. Muskoka Moments (street furniture, planting);
4. Begin discussions with parties on approvals for priority areas such as crosswalks, boardwalks and gateway signage in Bala; and,
5. Begin discussions to convert James Bartleman Way as a pedestrian only space.