

Pool 6 Visioning – Growth Standing Committee Memo – January 27, 2026

The Pool 6 property represents the next major phase of Thunder Bay's ongoing waterfront redevelopment at Marina Park and Prince Arthur's Landing. Formerly the site of the Pool 6 grain elevator and now home to the Cruise Ship Terminal, the *Alexander Henry*, the future Thunder Bay Art Gallery, and the proposed Science North Centre, the area offers an exceptional opportunity to shape a distinctive waterfront destination. Its strategic location and emerging mix of cultural, tourism, and recreational assets position Pool 6 as a transformative site with the potential to significantly enhance the city's waterfront experience.

The City has retained architecture/urban design firm Brook McIlroy to lead a comprehensive visioning exercise including a series of conceptual development scenarios to guide the future redevelopment of the Pool 6 waterfront lands. This work represents a pivotal next step in the Waterfront Master Plan Update and advances a long-term, strategic vision for one of the City's most significant and transformative waterfront sites. The Brook McIlroy team possess significant experience and expertise, having prepared both the Prince Arthur's Landing Master Plan and the 2015 Pool 6 site Master Plan.

Building on the foundations established in the 2015 Master Plan, the updated vision re-imagines Pool 6 as a vibrant and connected four seasons cultural destination that adds to the City's waterfront attractions and extends its appeal. The vision positions the Pool 6 lands as both a public gathering place and an economic catalyst, thoughtfully integrating public amenities, naturalized landscapes, and complementary private-sector investment in a manner that reflects Thunder Bay's unique identity, heritage, and relationship with nature and Lake Superior.

The visioning process was informed by an extensive review of technical studies, environmental assessments, land use compatibility analysis, archaeological work, identified constraints, and prior planning initiatives, alongside public input and collaborative engagement with City staff and the CEDC. Together, these inputs helped shape a set of guiding principles that prioritize environmental sustainability, quality of life, public access and economic prosperity, while ensuring the site remains adaptable to future opportunities and partnerships.

Central to the vision is a flexible framework plan that establishes a village-like development pattern organized around a "main street" feeling, supported by the necessary infrastructure, a comprehensive network of trails, and public spaces. This framework is designed to deliver a lively, year-round destination that is walkable and inclusive, while preserving the majority of the site for public open space and waterfront access. Development parcels are strategically positioned with building positioned to protect and maximize signature views of Lake Superior, the Sleeping Giant, and surrounding green spaces, assets that define the site's unique character and long-term value.

Four conceptual development scenarios are presented (attached) to illustrate how the framework can support a mix of cultural, recreational, residential, hospitality, and destination uses, including opportunities for convention facilities, hotels, market spaces, wellness amenities (e.g. Nordic spa), and public pavilions with a cultural emphasis. A dual-purpose service road and waterfront trail ensure that the cruise ship operational requirements are met. Collectively, the scenarios demonstrate the site's

potential to support a complete, all-season waterfront district that strengthens a cultural destination, attracts visitors and investment, and enhances quality of life for residents.

On January 27, Administration and Brook McIlroy will present the visioning concepts to the Growth Standing Committee to provide an overview of the process, the framework plan, and the four scenario concepts. Shortly after, public feedback will be sought over a variety of platforms, including the City's Get Involved Page and public open house. Feedback from the Committee and the public will inform the selection of a preferred concept to be further refined through detailed massing, 3D renderings, and a fly-through animation. The Pool 6 lands vision will help generate momentum and public enthusiasm, support partnership discussions, and position the City for future funding and investment opportunities. A subsequent report and selected concept scenario will be brought forward to the Growth Standing Committee for feedback and endorsement, and then to Council for adoption as an update to the 2015 Waterfront Master Plan.