

WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN UPDATE POOL 6 / TUG BOAT BASIN

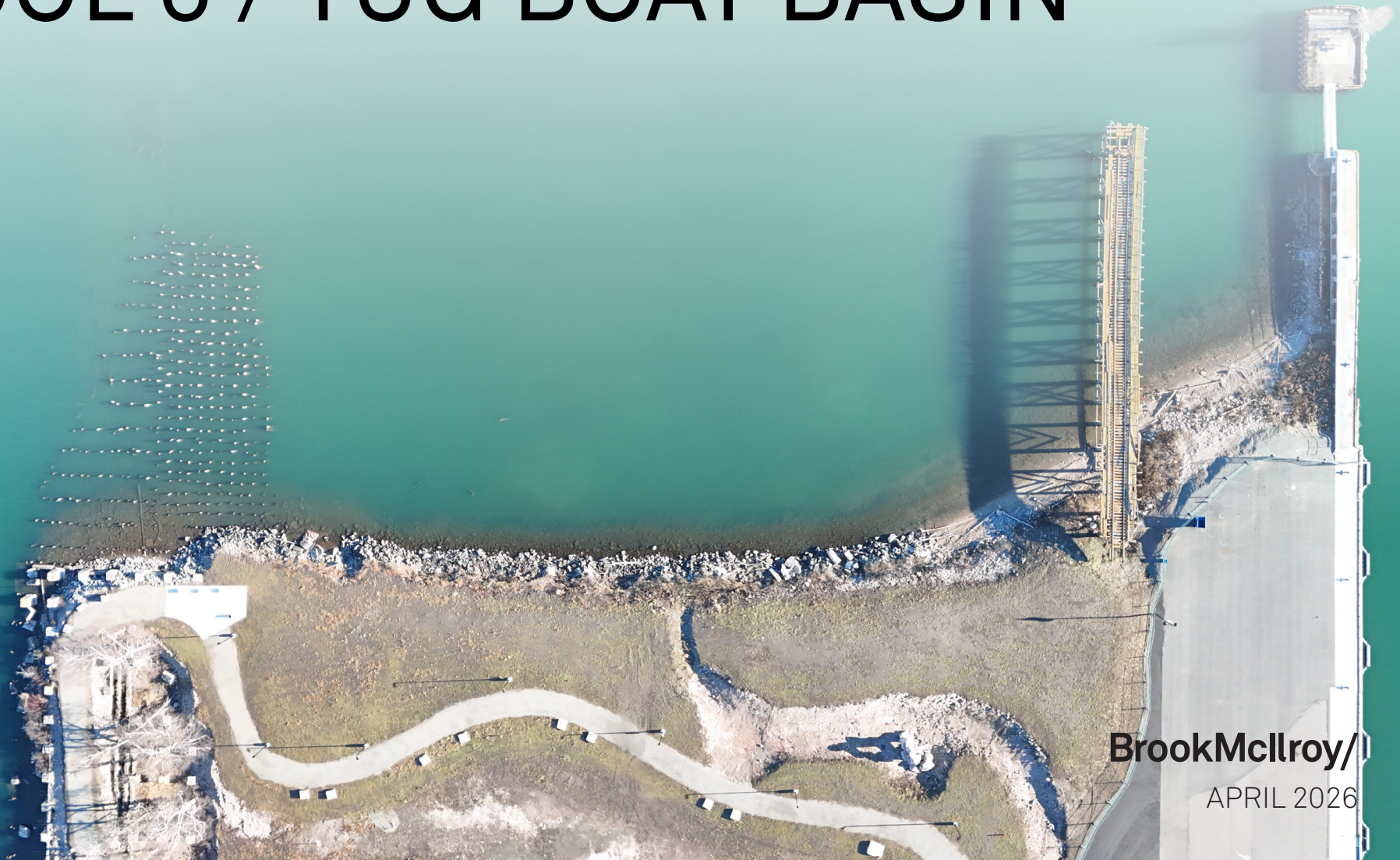




Figure 1. Artist's aerial rendering of Pool 6 Waterfront as envisioned in the Master Plan Update



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Figure 2. Artist's rendering of the Boathouse and Waterfront Trail as envisioned in the Master Plan Update

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on the vision established through the 2015 Waterfront Master Plan and informed by a decade of implementation, investment, and community momentum, this update re-imagines Thunder Bay's Waterfront as a continuous, connected, vibrant, mixed-use destination. As a highly visible and irreplaceable site on Lake Superior, Pool 6 has the potential to become a signature recreational, cultural, and tourism destination—anchoring the next chapter of Thunder Bay's waterfront evolution (see **Figure 2**).

This Plan positions the site as a place for year-round activity, gathering, and discovery—serving residents, attracting visitors, and strengthening the City's economy through a flexible design that supports strategic partnerships, incremental growth development and economic development.

The Pool 6 Tug Boat Basin lands represent a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a defining waterfront destination for Thunder Bay—one that celebrates the waterfront's cultural identity, elevates its national and international profile, and optimizes its land value.

Focused on City-owned lands south of Pearl Street, the Plan responds to evolving market realities, environmental considerations, and ever-changing community priorities. It puts forward a flexible, implementation-ready Framework Plan that balances generous public open space, ecological restoration, and continuous public access with carefully scaled opportunities for economic development. In particular, the Framework Plan is intended to


preserve more than 60 percent as public open space, protects iconic views of Lake Superior and the Sleeping Giant, and supports significant development opportunities that can be implemented with public and private sectors partners, injecting significant investment into the Thunder Bay economy.

The Master Plan Update explores two primary scenarios, each with two associated variations, illustrating a total of four possible pathways for realizing the Pool 6 Framework Plan. These scenarios showcase the breadth of possibilities and the inherent flexibility of the Framework Plan, allowing the City to respond nimbly to evolving community needs, market conditions, and emerging funding and partnership opportunities, while maintaining the core vision of a vibrant mixed-use waterfront district.

In summary, the Master Plan Update positions Pool 6 as a transformative waterfront investment: a resilient, inclusive, and economically catalytic destination that enhances quality of life, strengthens tourism, and establishes a lasting civic legacy for Thunder Bay.



Figure 3. Thunder Bay Waterfront at Pool 6 / Tug Boat Basin Existing Conditions



1.0

Site Location & Boundary

1.1 SITE LOCATION & BOUNDARY

The subject lands are located to the east of South Water St, and south of the Sleeping Giant Parkway. The lands are bound by the railway corridor to the west, Pearl Street to the north, the former Pool 6 site and wharf to the south, and the Tug Boat Basin to the east. Further east, and south is Lake Superior. The lands are irregular in shape, with an area of approximately 12.19ha. The lands currently contain two wetlands, one being provincially significant – which is referred to as the Habitat Pond. The Transportation Museum and a municipal building are adjacent to the cruiseship wharf (See **Figure 3,4, 5**).



Figure 4. Thunder Bay Waterfront at Pool 6 / Tug Boat Basin looking East

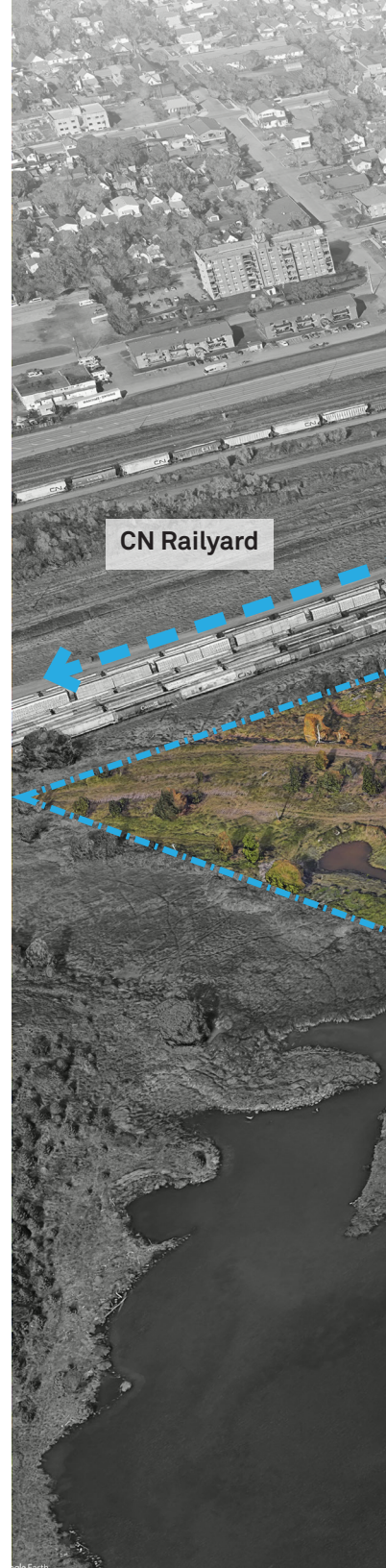




Figure 5. Site Boundary and Current Context

1.2 SCOPE OF WORK & PROCESS

The City of Thunder Bay intends to advance the development of the City-owned Pool 6 Waterfront Lands, representing Phase 2 of the Waterfront Master Plan update. The Pool 6/Tug Boat Basin Master Plan, originally prepared and updated by Brook McIlroy in 2015, forms the foundation for the scope of this project.

Since the 2015 Master Plan, the City has identified the need for a realistic implementation strategy that balances public amenities with complementary uses developed in partnership with the private sector. As a result, this project aims to deliver a comprehensive update to the previous 2015 Master Plan, integrating the City's evolving goals for economic development, tourism, recreation and community placemaking. Brook McIlroy (BMc) is retained by the City to deliver an updated Master Plan that reflects these evolving needs.

The process has been divided into three phases, each phase being approximately three (3) months in length. Phase 1 commenced in June and focused on background review and establishing the design objectives. It included a review of the following background documents:

1. The 2015 Waterfront Master Plan Update Pool 6/Tug Boat Basin by Brook McIlroy for the City of Thunder Bay
2. The 2022 Wildlife Habitat Strategy for the Thunder Bay Area of Concern by North Shore of Lake Superior Remedial Action Plans for the City of Thunder Bay.
3. The 2023 Phase 2 Waterfront Master Plan Update presentation by the City of Thunder Bay.
4. The 2024 Pool 6 Wetland Evaluation Summary by Jessie McFadden and Michelle Willows for the City of Thunder Bay.
5. The 2024 Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment for Pool 6 by Woodland Heritage Northwest for the City of Thunder Bay.
6. The 2024 Project Report on the Waterfront Master Plan Update (Survey) by the City of Thunder Bay.
7. The 2025 Pool 6 Property Best Use Study and Additional Housing Analysis by Bain Smith Consulting Inc. for the City of Thunder Bay Community Economic Development Commission (CEDC).
8. The 2022 Draft Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment by Stantec for the City of Thunder Bay.
9. The 2024 Draft Phase 2 Environmental Site Assessment by Stantec for the City of Thunder Bay CEDC.

Lidar information has also been provided by the City, as well as a Draft Land Use Compatibility Assessment completed by Stantec in August 2025, which the City shared for review in October 2025. A thorough site visit was conducted on September 3, 2025.

Phase 2 began around the end of September. This phase is categorized by drafting four (4) design scenarios. The draft scenarios were provided to the City's project team for feedback and review, followed by an in-person Workshop with City Staff on November 18th to gather input from various experts and establish a strong framework plan. The working session with the City provided valuable

insight into the preferred concepts, programs, overall design and design objectives.

Phase 3 began in December and represents the final phase in this process. This phase included refinement of the preferred concept, with accompanying 3D renderings and a fly-through, the preparation of a report and presentation for the Growth Standing Committee, a public open house, and concluded with a final report and presentation to Council.

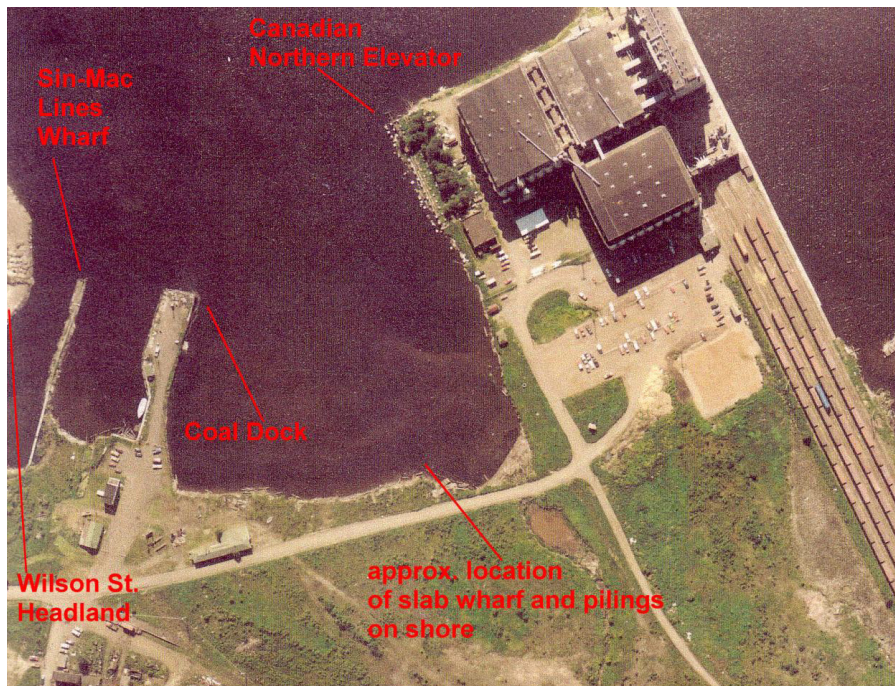


Figure 6. Image showing location of the CNR Elevator Complex, Sin-Mac Wharf and Coal Dock

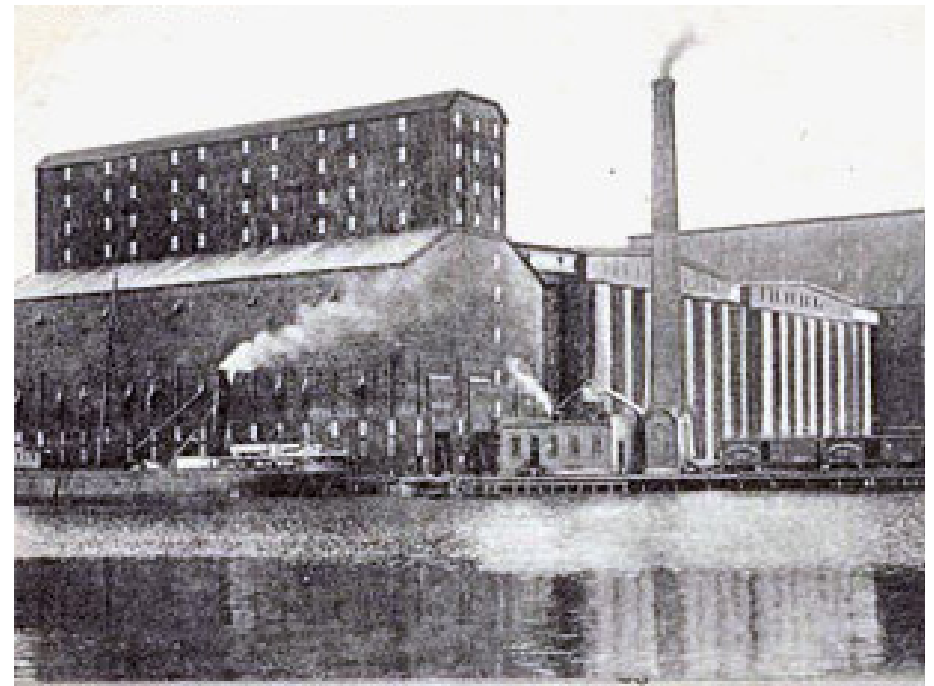


Figure 7. Image showing location of the CNR Elevator Complex and Elevator B



Figure 8. Image showing location of the existing site looking north



2.0

Overview of the 2015 Master Plan

2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CONCEPT PLAN (2015)

The concept plan from 2015 incorporated 22 different features into the site design - See **Figure 9**. Key elements and components of this Plan is summarized below:

Trails: The 2015 concept included an extensive trail network design for various activities, levels of ability, and accessibility.

Cultural Areas¹: The 2015 plan recognized the importance of preserving and celebrating the site's cultural and industrial heritage. Indigenous place names were incorporated, as well as the protection of archaeological features. Facilities such as a roundhouse and an Indigenous sweat lodge were proposed to enhance community engagement.

Cultural Campus Development Plans: The 2015 concept included a vision for a cultural campus that integrated recreational and artistic activities. This included the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, an apple orchard and community garden, a wide naturalized public space, and a roundhouse /arts workshop.

Tug Boat Basin: This was proposed for non-motorized boating activities and preserving archaeological resources. It included a naturalized shoreline to protect ecosystems and educate the public. Limited public access to Sin-Mac Jetty to protect archaeological resources. A paved trail was also proposed to connect the Pool 6 parking lot to the fishing and canoe/kayak dock.

Three Hills Forest: This was an area to feature regraded hills and a wetland channel for recreational activities. This site area was proposed at 1.8ha, and three regraded hills. It included a BMX trail system, and a 500m wetland channel that would double as a skating circuit during the winter. The wetland channel was intended to contribute to storm water management and filtration. Extensive reforestation was also being proposed and included plantings of silver maple and other native species.

Nordic Springs: A Nordic-themed public spa was proposed to celebrate Thunder Bay's Finnish heritage and promote health and wellness. The facility included outdoor hot and cold pools, saunas and a café. It was intended to be compatible with the proposed/ existing trail network. The design was intended to be sustainable, small in scale and well-integrated into the natural setting.

The Field: The 2015 concept showed a large open field. This was intended to be a flexible open space for various recreational activities and gatherings. It was originally designed to have a trail encircling it, with a sculpted landscape for seating and shelter. An adjacent public beach to the east was also proposed.

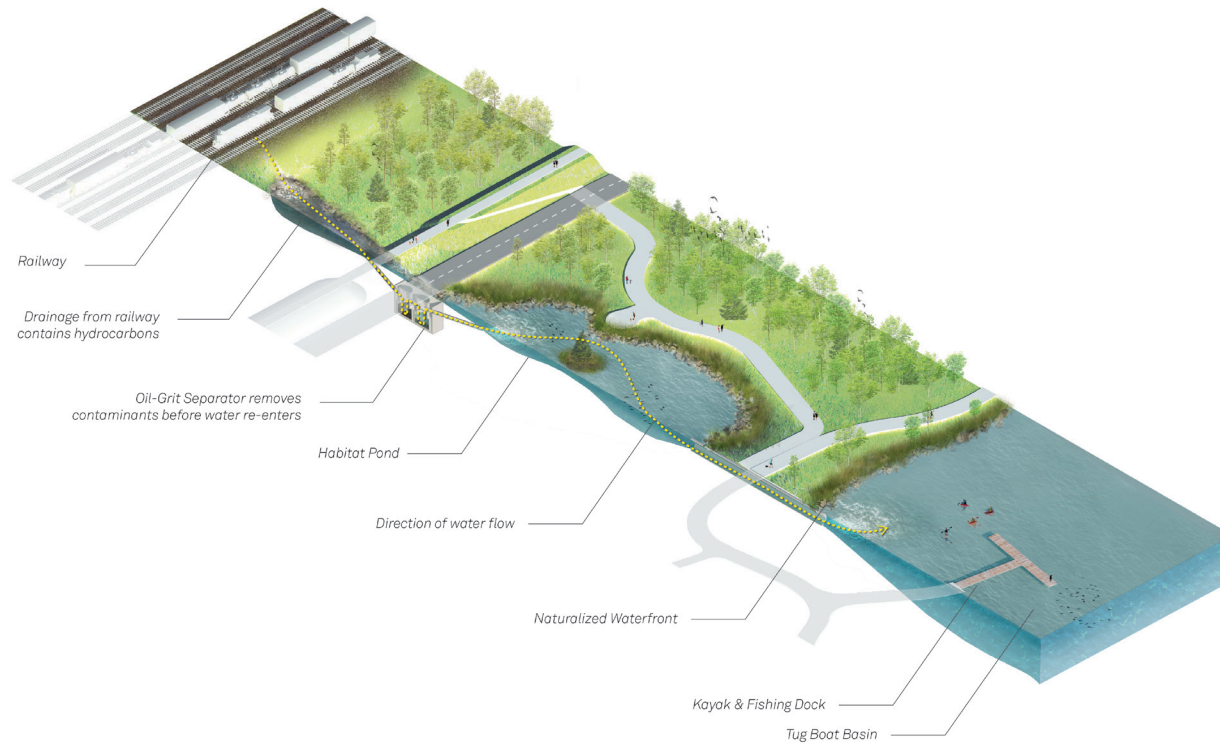
Pool 6 Park Pavilion: This was the re-configuration/repurposing of the existing Pool 6 building. It was originally envisioned to enhance public services and amenities, with the addition of food concessions and visitor amenities for cruise ship passengers.

¹ The Indigenous components of the cultural campus and cultural areas were informed through an Indigenous Workshop, and consultation with Fort William First Nation community members.



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. SPIRIT GARDEN | 12. THREE HILLS FOREST TRAILS |
| 2. SIN-MAC JETTY | 13. NORDIC SPRINGS |
| 3. COAL DOCK | 14. DOCKSIDE ALLEE |
| 4. TUGBOAT BASIN | 15. POOL 6 PARK PAVILION |
| 5. PICNIC DOCK | 16. WILDFLOWER HILL |
| 6. FISHING, CANOE/KAYAK DOCK | 17. THE FIELD |
| 7. PARKS MAINTENANCE AREA | 18. DOCK 5 HERITAGE GARDEN |
| 8. CULTURAL CAMPUS INCLUDING THUNDER BAY ART GALLERY | 19. CRUISE SHIP WHARF |
| 9. RIDGE LINE TRAIL | 20. RAILWAY TRESTLE |
| 10. APPLE ORCHARD | 21. WAABINONG (EAST) LOOKOUT |
| 11. HABITAT POND | 22. EXTENSION OF SLEEPING GIANT PARKWAY TO CENTRAL AVE OVERPASS |

Figure 9. Original Tug Boat Basin Concept Plan (2015)



Naturalization Areas: There was a considerable amount of environmental restoration included in the 2015 concept. This included things such as soil aeration and phytoremediation. There were stormwater management facilities proposed to improve water quality and protect habitats. Reforestation of native species to enhance biodiversity and ecological health, habitat protection and improvements. It also prioritized the re-use of existing fill, water quality enhancement, and opportunities for active and passive recreation.

Pool 6 Wharf : The wharf was intended to continue to provide public access and accommodate large vessels. The railway trestle was proposed to be retrofitted for public access and seating areas. A Waabinong (east) lookout was also incorporated to provide scenic views and interpretive signage about Indigenous history.

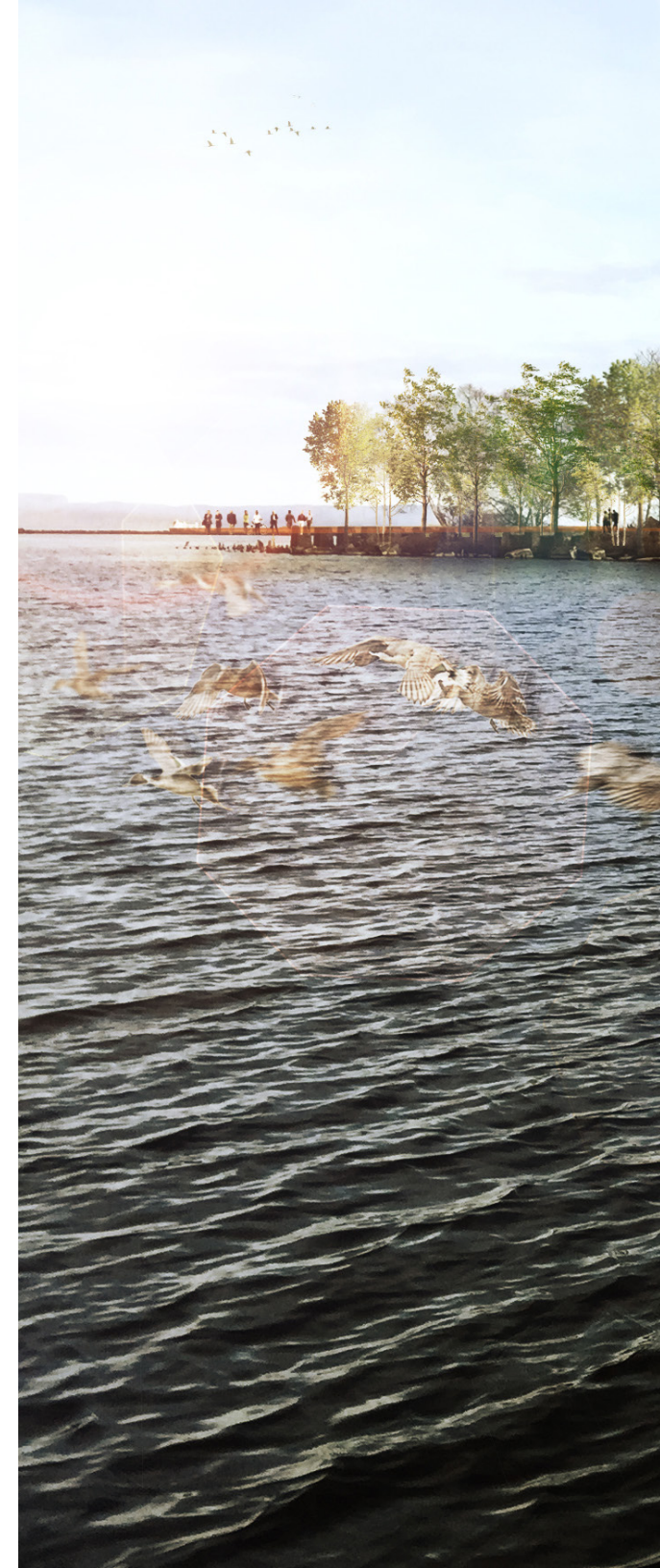




Figure 10. View of Wildflower Hill, Pavilion and Dock 5 Heritage Garden (2015)

2.2 SUMMARY OF VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES (2015)

The original vision statement from the 2015 Master Plan was: “year-round, connected, and ours to celebrate.” This vision strongly reflected the intention to improve and maintain year-round access to the site, and to revitalize the area to celebrate and highlight the rich culture, heritage and landscape of Thunder Bay.

The guiding principles that were originally established have been reviewed and incorporated into the proposed concepts and are intended to be carried forward into the final design of the site. Minor changes are expected as the context of the site and development climate has changed since 2015. As demonstrated in the Framework Plan and the scenarios provided in the following sections, the Update still emphasizes prioritization of the natural environment, providing land and water-based activities, providing public access to the site and water’s edge, celebrating and highlighting Thunder Bay’s heritage and culture, and linking the waterfront to economic renewal.

Overview of 2015 Master Plan - Guiding Principles

The following ten guiding principles were incorporated into the 2015 Master Plan and remain fully relevant to this Update:



Prioritize the creation of a natural setting



Integrate Thunder Bay's heritage



Provide land and water-based activities



Extend the network of public art and Interpretive installations



Provide continuous public access along the water's edge



Improve access for all transportation modes and transit using low-impact development design



Provide new publicly accessible cultural destinations on the waterfront



Provide access for low-impact marine uses in Tug Boat Basin



Provide a large green multi-purpose outdoor space with views to the water



Link waterfront initiatives to economic renewal

2.3 OVERVIEW OF KEY DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS (2015)

The following key design recommendations from the original 2015 Master Plan were reviewed, validated, and carried forward in this Update (**Figure 11**):

- 1. A year-round cultural landscape:** year-round access is still being shown to Tug Boat Basin through non-motorized water crafts. A wildflower hill is still being proposed along with uninterrupted green space along the waterfront (See **Figure 10**).
- 2. Restored habitat and environmental sustainability:** the current concepts incorporate the treatment of railway run-off. The existing habitat pond remains an important feature that is being maintained for both educational and design purposes.
- 3. Extended public access and trail network:** the concept of a continuous trail network is carried forward from the 2015 Plan. Recently, the City has built segments of the trail network parallel to the shoreline flanking Tug Boat Basin and on the Pool 6 site.
- 4. A mixed-use district and economic development:** a site that maintains a mix of uses for year-round enjoyment is still applicable. This will help to attract visitors, while serving the broader community.
- 5. Cultural heritage and Indigeneity:** this site is particularly rich in both industrial and Indigenous history. This is intended to be reflected in the programming, design, and naming of facilities and features.





Figure 11. Aerial View with the Key Recommendations of the 2015 Master Plan

2.4 WHAT HAS BEEN IMPLEMENTED SINCE 2015

Since the original 2015 Master Plan, several proposed initiatives have been realized, including:

- Extension of the existing trail network- **Figure 12** and **Figure 15**.
- Construction of the first southerly leg of the Sleeping Giant Parkway - **Figure 13**
- The Thunder Bay Art Gallery (currently under construction)- **Figure 14**
- Improvements to the cruise ship wharf- **Figure 16**

After the completion of the Thunder Bay Art Gallery, and with the future establishment of Science North, a cultural corridor will begin to take shape, woven together by a connected trail network.



Figure 12. Existing Waterfront Trail



Figure 13. Construction of the first southerly leg of the Sleeping Giant Parkway



Figure 14. The Thunder Bay Art Gallery (currently under construction)



Figure 15. Extension of the existing trail network



Figure 16. Improvements to the cruise ship wharf



Figure 17. View of the Habitat Pond and the Extension of the Sleeping Giant Parkway



3.0

Context & Site Analysis

3.1 LAND USE DESIGNATION AND ZONING BY-LAW

The subject lands are partially designated Natural Heritage and partially designated Commercial as per Schedule A of the Official Plan. The portion that is designated Natural Heritage is further designated Natural Corridor, and Provincially Significant Coastal Wetland as per Schedule B of the Official Plan. The portion that is designated Commercial is further designated Waterfront Commercial as per Schedule E of the Official Plan. **See Figure 17 and Figure 18.**

The subject lands are zoned “WC” – Waterfront Commercial Zone and maintain an environmental overlay. The environmental overlay is to indicate that the lands are within the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority regulated area, and may require review, approval and a permit by the associated conservation authority prior to development taking place. Permitted uses and development standards associated with the “WC” Zone can be found in Section 4 of the City of Thunder Bay Zoning By-law 1-2022. The “WC” Zone permits the following uses:

- Building supply outlet
- Furniture store
- Hotel
- Indoor recreation use*

- Microbrewery
- Restaurant
- Retail commercial use
- Service commercial use
- Water-related use
- Health centre
- Office

(Indoor recreation use** – a **building** used for commercial indoor leisure activities, cultural or social promotion, or entertainment. The term includes museum, art gallery, movie theatre, social club, public hall, fitness centre, convention centre, theatre for the performing arts, covered arena or field, gymnasium, billiard hall, bowling alley, miniature golf course, driving range, ice or roller skating or curling rink, swimming pool, sauna or a similar **use**. The term excludes **outdoor recreation uses**.)*



Figure 18. Land Use Designation from the Official Plan. The lands are designated Natural Heritage (green) and Commercial (red)



Figure 19. Land Use Designation from the Official Plan. The lands are further designated Natural Corridor (light green), and Provincially Significant Coastal Wetland (teal) and Waterfront Commercial (space without colour)

3.2 LAND USE COMPATIBILITY AND D-6 GUIDELINES

If any of the above permitted uses were to be established, this could be accomplished without the need for any planning approvals. However, if a use that is not currently permitted within the “WC” Zone were to be established, this would require planning approval, and a decision from Council. If planning approval is required, this would include a review of the applicable planning policies and regulations: Provincial Planning Statement (PPS), 2024, Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, Official Plan and Zoning By-law. This review would need to ensure the proposed use and land use change is consistent with the PPS, conforms to or does not conflict with the Growth Plan for Northern Ontario, and meets the general intent and purpose of the City of Thunder Bay Official Plan and Zoning By-law. If a use that is considered sensitive (i.e. residential) were to be established, in addition to the planning review, this would also require a land use compatibility analysis and an assessment of the **D-6 guidelines**.



Figure 20. WC Zone

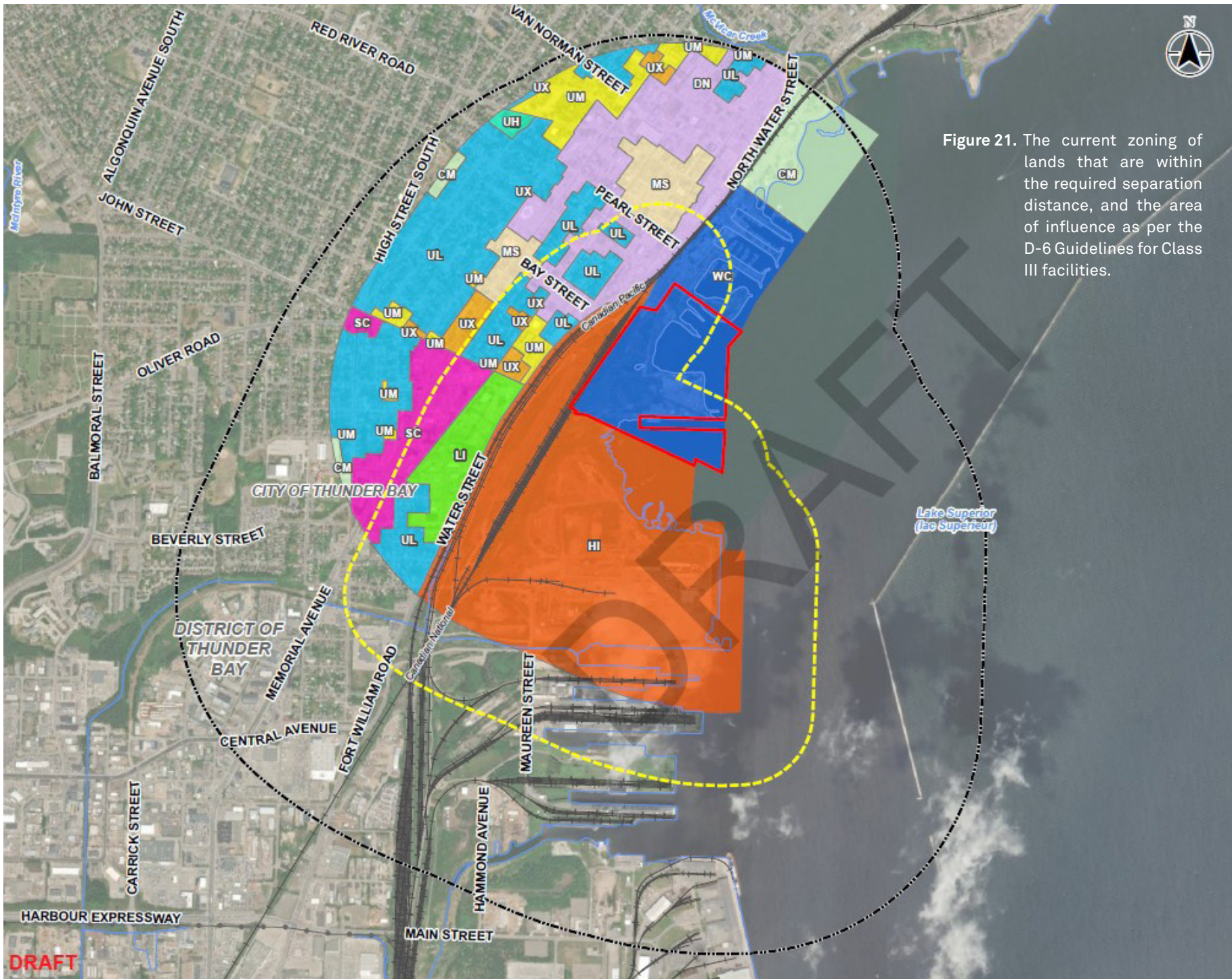


Figure 21. The current zoning of lands that are within the required separation distance, and the area of influence as per the D-6 Guidelines for Class III facilities.

3.3 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The site presents many unique challenges and opportunities. The subject lands contain a habitat pond, varying degrees of **ecological sensitivity** throughout, as identified by the 2024 Pool 6 Wetland Evaluation, and the need to improve wildlife habitat as identified by the 2022 Wildlife Habitat Strategy for the Thunder Bay Area of Concern, making development more challenging in certain areas.

Despite these challenges, the natural features can be enhanced and leveraged as a defining asset, creating a unique ecological draw for the site. For example, the pond is currently treating stormwater runoff from the railyard and will require expansion southerly. This is an opportunity to naturalize the site, which has environmental and ecological benefits, but also benefits its users. It provides wildlife habitat ideal for bird watching, which could also be improved. Strengthening habitat along the shoreline can create continuous waterfront green spaces and a connected network of naturalized areas.

Pool 6 has retained many elements from its industrial past, including its **railway trestle and jetty structures**. This remnant infrastructure is fixed as removal is laborious and costly. As with most former industrial sites, environmental and soil conditions must be investigated and managed accordingly; this site would be no different. However, these elements reference the site's history and provide an opportunity to be incorporated as a design element to highlight and educate visitors and community members on the site's interesting past.

A grove of birch trees has been retained along the northeast corner of the site. These trees provide crucial habitat and should be retained and augmented in association with a broader reforestation strategy throughout the Pool 6 site. These trees can be used as the foundation for establishing a renewed ecology along the water.

The **Cruise Ship Terminal** and **Transportation Museum** along the southern shore of the Pool 6 lands have specific functional and security requirements which must be maintained. The Cruise Ship area is a secured site with customs clearance operations, fencing, and a tarmac area that can accommodate large trucks for servicing the ships. These requirements will be maintained and enhanced through improvements recommended in the plan that also ensure a more appropriate integration with the public and mixed-use operations proposed for the surrounding lands.

The re-grading of the site has created uneven terrain. The existing hill located in the northeast portion of the site has created challenging conditions for redevelopment. Removing the potentially contaminated substrates could be costly if a proper foundation is required to support future development. However, this hill provides incredible views across the bay to Sleeping Giant and Pie Island and is proposed to be enhanced as a wildflower landscape feature, consistent with the 2015 recommendation.

The CN Railyard, located along the western portion of the site, produces runoff that drains into the adjacent wetlands. The

proposed concepts suggest careful design and grading to visually and acoustically screen the railyard while providing seamless pedestrian and cycling connections to the water. For example, the proposed constructed wetlands can effectively capture and treat the runoff.

Lands zoned “HI” – Heavy Industrial Zone are located south of the site, although the actual uses currently in operation are not heavy industrial in nature. However, the existing zoning places the Pool 6 lands within the area of influence (AOI) of this designation. This adjacent designation, as well as proximity to the railyard creates potential conflicts with sensitive uses, such as residential. In order to permit residential uses, a revised zoning designation will be required for Pool 6, which will need to consider mitigating strategies that consider the influence of both the industrial designation to the south and the railyard to the west.



POOL 6 FRAMEWORK PLAN

The Pool 6 Tug Boat Basin lands represent a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a defining waterfront destination for Thunder Bay—one that celebrates the waterfront's cultural identity, elevates its national and international profile, and optimizes its land value.

Focused on City-owned lands south of Paul Street, the Plan responds to evolving market realities, environmental considerations, and ever-changing community priorities. It puts forward a flexible, implementation-ready Framework Plan that balances generous public open space, ecological restoration, and continued public access with carefully scaled opportunities for economic development.

In particular, the Framework Plan is intended to preserve more than 50 percent of the site for public use, protect iconic views of Lake Superior and the Sleeping Giant, and supports up to one million square feet of development, representing approximately \$850 million in construction value.



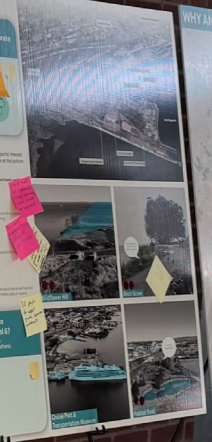
WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR

What have you heard so far about the Pool 6 waterfront development? What are the most important things you've heard? What are the most important things you've heard? What are the most important things you've heard?

Public Survey 2024 Options Summary

The Pool 6 Public Survey for the Pool 6 Framework Plan (2024) was completed. The summary report shows the following results:

- 70% of respondents support the development.
- 65% of respondents support the proposed public open space.
- 60% of respondents support the proposed waterfront destination.
- 55% of respondents support the proposed economic development.
- 50% of respondents support the proposed cultural identity.
- 45% of respondents support the proposed international profile.
- 40% of respondents support the proposed land value optimization.



WHY AN UPDATE IS NEEDED NOW



A stylized illustration in shades of teal and light blue. It shows a hand holding a pencil, writing on a notepad. The background features a pattern of wavy lines. The overall theme is related to planning or design.

4.0

What We Heard

4.1 PUBLIC SURVEY SUMMARY (MARCH 2024)

From February to March of 2024, a survey was undertaken by the City of Thunder Bay to regain public interest in the 2015 Master Plan, and to gather feedback on what components of the 2015 Master Plan the public would still like to see, and what type of development would be desirable for the area. There was a total of 364 respondents. Of those that responded, 66.5% noted they would still like to see a canoe/kayak dock in the update, 63.5% noted they would still like to see a fishing/picnic dock, and 57.7% noted they would still like to see Sleeping Giant Parkway extended to the Central Avenue overpass. In terms of preferred development, 63.5% of the respondents indicated they would like to see passive recreation uses such as biking or walking, 53.6% indicated they would like to see commercial and retail opportunities, and 37.6% indicated they would like to see Pool 6 be used for hospitality services, such as a hotel, spa or resort.

Public Survey Summary (February- March 2024)

Engaged Participants: 364

What components of the 2015 Master Plan would you like to remain consistent?



Canoe/Kayak Dock

66.5% of respondents indicated that they would like to see a canoe/kayak dock in the master plan update.



Fishing/Picnic Dock

63.5% of respondents indicated that they would like to see a fishing/picnic dock in the master plan update.



Extension of Sleeping Giant Parkway

57.7% of respondents indicated that they would like to see Sleeping Giant Parkway extended to the Central Avenue overpass.

What types of development would you like to see the Pool 6 lands used for?



Passive Recreation

63.5% of respondents indicated that they would like to see passive recreation uses such as biking or walking.



Commercial & Retail

53.6% of respondents indicated that they would like to see commercial and retail opportunities.



Hospitality

37.6% of respondents indicated that they would like to see Pool 6 be used for hospitality services like hotels, spas, or resorts.

4.2 WORKSHOP WITH THE CITY STAFF (NOVEMBER 2025)

On November 18th, 2025, BMC and the Project Team at the City of Thunder Bay met to go over the draft concepts and come up with a framework plan to move forward, and ultimately present to the Growth Standing Committee. This framework plan was intended to continue to inform the three concepts, with one concept eventually taking precedence. This one concept will be refined and presented to Council.

At the November workshop BMC received valuable feedback specifically; flexibility of on-site uses is important for the economic viability of the site, to adjust the road configuration based on security requirements of the cruise ship wharf, to explore concepts that feature development closer to the eastern shoreline while maintaining the views and vistas for development to the west, to ensure the block sizes are of sufficient size and scale to be viable for development and economic return, maintain sufficient programmable outdoor space, create a balance between the natural and built environment, allow for equal access to the water's edge, and expressed overall support for the proposed concepts and design. There was also considerable discussion on remediation of the site.



4.3 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE & SURVEY (MARCH 2026)

On March 1, 2026, the City hosted a well-attended Public Open House at the Baggage Arts Building, bringing together nearly 100 participants to review and provide feedback on the framework plan and four proposed development scenarios. This in-person engagement was followed by an online public survey that remained open for a few weeks, allowing for broader community participation. In total, approximately 420 participants responded to the survey, offering additional input and a wide range of perspectives on the proposed mix of programs and uses.

A consistent theme emerging from both the open house and survey responses is the importance of striking a careful balance between public access, community amenities, and the site's economic development potential. Participants expressed strong support for an approach that minimizes the overall development footprint while preserving and enhancing high-quality public realm experiences. Within this context, there was notable interest in incorporating a public market as a key destination feature.

Feedback on specific program elements further reinforces these priorities. Participants demonstrated a strong preference for uses that enhance the site's natural character and public accessibility. The preservation and integration of natural green spaces and habitats were identified as essential, alongside the creation of waterfront walking trails and active transportation connections that support both recreational and everyday use. There was also clear

support for incorporating comfortable and well-designed public amenities, including seating areas, picnic spaces, washrooms, and intuitive signage and wayfinding.

Respondents favoured the inclusion of a public market—ideally a flexible indoor-outdoor space—as well as smaller-scale cafés, food vendors, or a waterfront restaurant that could take advantage of views and contribute to the vibrancy of the site. Cultural and educational programming was also highly valued, with interest in elements such as a marine museum, Indigenous cultural spaces, and opportunities for historical interpretation that reflect the site's identity and heritage.

Family-friendly and community-oriented uses were strongly supported, including spaces and activities for children, informal recreation opportunities, and features such as skating paths or beach access. Participants also emphasized the importance of flexible community gathering spaces and event areas that can host a range of activities throughout the year. In this regard, year-round programming emerged as a key priority, with interest in winter amenities such as maintained walking paths and seasonal activities that ensure the site remains active in all seasons. While opinions on accommodations were generally positive, support for a hotel was strongest when it was integrated with complementary uses that enhance the overall visitor experience.

Some ideas generated more mixed or divided responses. Concepts such as a Nordic spa or sauna elicited varying levels of interest, suggesting they may appeal to a more niche audience. Similarly, convention-related uses were viewed with caution, with concerns about their scale, accessibility, and alignment with broader public priorities.

The least favoured uses were those perceived to limit public access or prioritize private development over community benefit. Residential uses, particularly condominiums, received limited support, as did large-scale private developments that could reduce the amount or quality of publicly accessible open space.

Overall, the engagement process underscores a strong public preference for a people-focused, publicly accessible waterfront that prioritizes nature, community, and year-round vibrancy, while accommodating carefully considered, context-sensitive development that supports long-term economic sustainability.

Following a careful analysis of the feedback received, Scenario 2B (as presented in Section 7) emerged as the most preferred option overall.





Figure 22. Public Open House, March 1, 2026



Figure 23. Residual pilings from former rail line on CNR Elevator Dock



5.0

**Vision & Design Objectives for Pool 6
Master Plan Update (2026)**

5.1 RENEWED VISION: CONNECTING NATURE, COMMUNITY, AND DESTINATION

The original vision from the 2015 Master Plan – “year-round, connected, and ours to celebrate” – continues to be a foundational element of the Master Plan Update and is reflected in the design scenarios explored by BMC. Building on this foundation, the Vision has evolved to reflect the City’s and community’s growing aspirations, imagining a waterfront that is not only connected and accessible but also dynamic, resilient, and celebrated by all. The following statement envisions the future of the Pool 6 lands.



Figure 25. Artist’s aerial rendering of Pool 6 Waterfront as envisioned in the Master Plan Update



RENEWED VISION STATEMENT

The Pool 6 lands will emerge as a transformative anchor for Thunder Bay’s waterfront, completing its connectivity and extending the vitality of the larger waterfront system. This site will thoughtfully integrate with existing environmental networks and trail systems, supporting both active and passive recreation, enhancing waterfront attractions, and connecting seamlessly with the extension of the Sleeping Giant Parkway. It will become a resilient, long-lasting destination that celebrates Thunder Bay’s unique identity and natural beauty.

Designed to foster a ‘village’ character, the site will feature an internal network of roads and interconnected pathways that ensure safe, continuous circulation for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles alike. Anchored by a vibrant ‘main street’, its 4-5 development parcels—nestled within a naturalized setting—will cluster a mix of complementary uses, creating a lively, 24/7, all-season and complete community.

Guided by a flexible spatial framework, Pool 6 is poised to evolve as a cultural and civic destination, providing opportunities for partnerships with all levels of government and the private sector, and offering a rich, engaging experience for residents and visitors alike.



5.2 MASTER PLAN UPDATE DESIGN OBJECTIVES

The following are design objectives that have informed the Master Plan Update:



1. Attract direct and indirect economic benefits.



2. Diversify and expand the activities available at the waterfront, and the City of Thunder Bay.



3. Enhance the City's waterfront and develop the area as the City's premier tourism attraction.



4. Establish a vibrant, year-round destination that attracts residents, visitors and new investment.



5. Preserve, enhance and showcase natural environmental features, local identity and design excellence.



6. Apply a natural systems approach to site development planning and stormwater management.



7. Celebrate Indigenous culture and advance reconciliation.



8. Maintain and continue the waterfront trail along the water's edge.



9. Integrate parking solutions into new developments while limiting surface parking to short-term public use.



10. Ensure the proposed scenarios are feasible.



11. Establish a plausible development strategy to facilitate interest in the site to create a vibrant mixed-use destination and neighbourhood.



CN Rail Yard

Sleeping Giant Pkwy

Thunder Bay Art Gallery

Science North

Tugboat Basin

Habitat Pond

Boathouse & Dock

Block B Nordic Spa

Block A Hotel

Lookout

Forest

Wetland

Urban Beach

Forest

Main Street

Block F Public Pavilion

Block C Waterpark & Hotel

Block E Market

Block D Residential

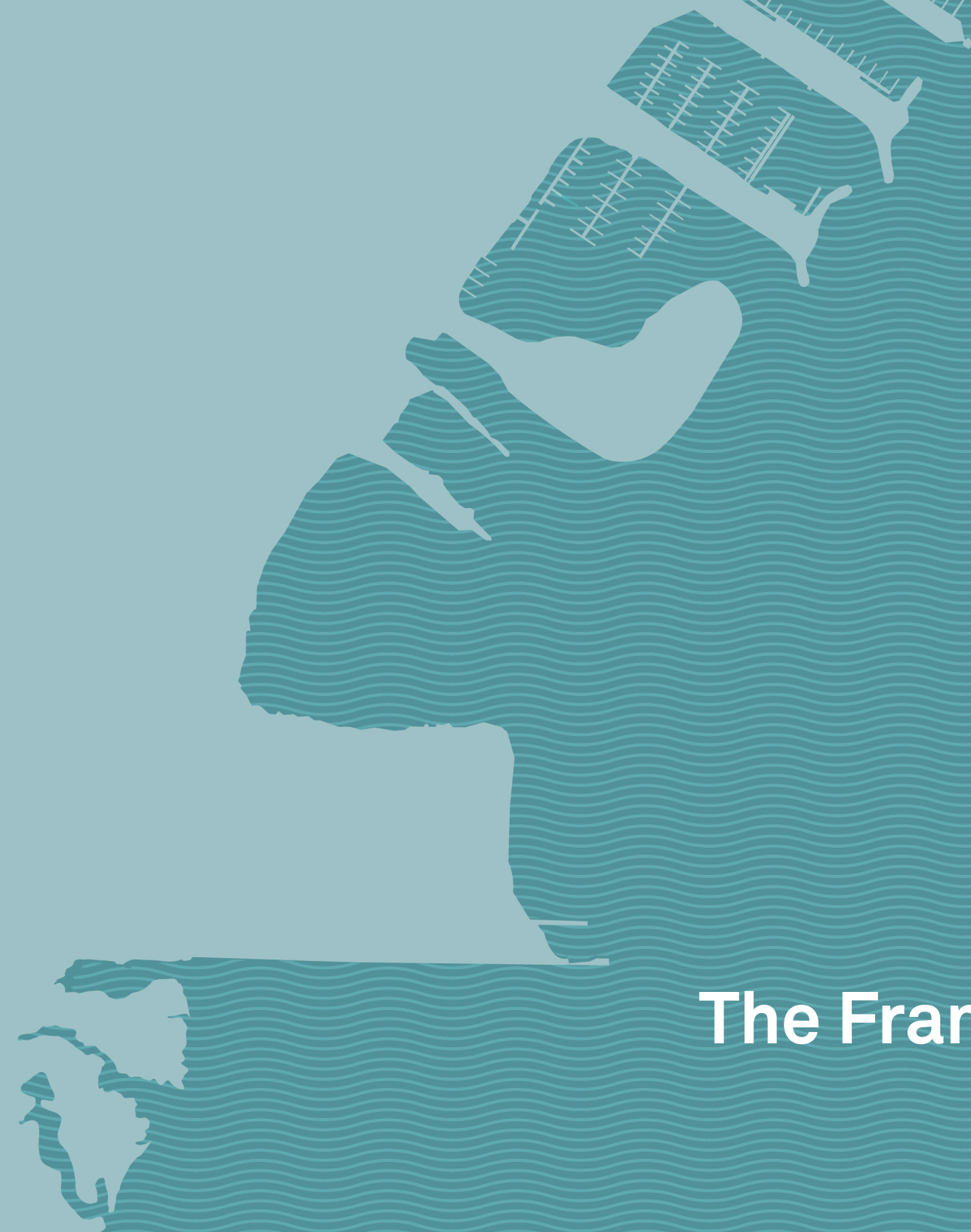
Service Path

Alexander Henry Museum

Cruise Ship Terminal

Jetty

Figure 27. Artist's rendering of Pool 6 Waterfront as envisioned in the Master Plan Update



6.0

The Framework Plan

6.1 A FLEXIBLE AND ADAPTABLE FRAMEWORK PLAN

Focused on City-owned lands south of Pearl Street, the Framework Plan positions Pool 6 as a key component of a broader, continuous waterfront experience—linking north to the Water Garden Pavilion and Prince Arthur’s Landing, as well as the Thunder Bay Art Gallery and the future Science North development, and extending south via the extension of Sleeping Giant Parkway to the Central Avenue Bridge. This connected system is structured around a network of public open spaces and a diverse mix of uses that support gathering, recreation, and discovery along the shoreline.

A core component of the Framework Plan is an extensive, continuous trail network that is maintained along the perimeter, through the interior, and within each development parcel. This network integrates the phased multi-use recreational Waterfront Trail plan (approved by City Council in July 2021 ¹) as an important continuous public link along the waterfront. This ensures an accessible, safe, continuous pedestrian connection and public access along the waterfront edge.

Recognizing that the success of a waterfront—particularly as a year-round destination—relies on a dynamic and well-balanced mix of uses, the Plan promotes a thoughtful combination of regional attractions and local amenities designed to appeal to a wide range of users and interests. To enable this, the Framework Plan is intentionally flexible and adaptable, allowing development

to evolve over time in response to emerging partnerships, funding opportunities, and shifting community needs. This approach supports the creation of a critical mass of activity capable of attracting and sustaining both residents and visitors throughout the year.

The following pages details the concepts explored for the Pool 6 Waterfront lands as core components of the Framework Plan.

¹ <https://www.thunderbay.ca/en/city-hall/resources/Documents/Mayor-and-Council/aJune-14-2021-Committee-of-the-Whole-Agenda.pdf>



1. Water Garden Pavilion



2. Science North



3. Habitat Pond



Figure 28. A flexible Framework Plan re-imagines Thunder Bay's Waterfront as a continuous, connected, vibrant, mixed-use destination.



4. Spirit Gardens



5. Art Gallery



6. Heritage

KEY CONCEPTS

DIVERSE LANDSCAPES AND ECOLOGY

A defining feature of the Framework Plan is a cohesive green infrastructure system that integrates recreation, ecological restoration, cultural interpretation, and everyday public life. Rather than isolated landscapes, the waterfront is envisioned as a sequence of distinct yet interconnected public realm types, each offering a unique spatial character, ecological role, and visitor experience:

1. Existing Habitat Pond – A Protected Ecological Core

The existing habitat pond is preserved and enhanced as a foundational ecological asset within the site. It functions as a living system supporting biodiversity, water filtration, and stormwater management while also offering opportunities for passive observation and environmental education. Its edges are carefully shaped to balance ecological sensitivity with limited public access and viewing moments.

2. Extended, Connected Trail Network – A Continuous Public Spine

A comprehensive and continuous trail network is established as the organizing framework for the entire waterfront. This system connects all landscape types, program areas, and shoreline edges into a unified public realm experience. It ensures uninterrupted pedestrian access, reinforces inclusivity, and creates a resilient mobility structure that supports walking, cycling, and year-round recreational use.

3. Meadows – Open, Living Fields of Ecology and Gathering

The meadow landscapes provide expansive, open spaces defined by native grasses and seasonal wildflowers. These areas support pollinator habitats while maintaining visual openness across the waterfront. Designed for flexibility, they accommodate informal recreation, passive enjoyment, and occasional community events while reinforcing the site's ecological identity.

4. Boathouse and Dock – Active Waterfront Recreation Node

Tug Boat Basin is envisioned as a low-impact, culturally sensitive waterfront hub supporting non-motorized boating activities such as canoeing and kayaking. A modest boathouse and dock infrastructure enable access to the water while maintaining ecological integrity and shoreline sensitivity. The design carefully integrates interpretive opportunities related to the site's cultural and natural history, reinforcing a balance between recreation and preservation.

5. Urban Beach – A Social Edge to the Lake

A small urban beach introduces a vibrant, soft-edged public waterfront experience inspired by contemporary urban precedents. This sandy shoreline creates a welcoming civic space for relaxation, informal play, and seasonal gathering. Framed by landscape planting and adjacent amenities, it becomes a key social destination within the broader waterfront system.

6. Forest Grove – A Shaded Immersive Retreat

Located at the tip of the Peninsula, the Forest Grove preserves existing mature trees as a calm, restorative counterpoint to the more active waterfront landscapes. Native canopy and understory planting enhance biodiversity, create a shaded microclimate, and support immersive natural experiences. The Waterfront Trail is gently woven through the grove, encouraging slow movement, quiet reflection, and a deeper connection to nature.

7. Wildflower Hill and Lookout – A Seasonal Landmark in the Landscape

Wildflower Hill is a signature landscape feature that celebrates seasonality, biodiversity, and elevated public experience. Native wildflower plantings create a continuously changing tapestry of colour, texture, and scent throughout the year. At its summit, a carefully integrated lookout provides panoramic views over Lake Superior and the surrounding waterfront, transforming the hill into

KEY CONCEPTS

1. Existing Habitat Pond
2. Extended Trail Network
3. Meadows
4. Boathouse and Dock
5. Urban Beach
6. Forest Groves
7. Wildflower Hill and Lookout
8. Regenerative Landscapes
9. Wetland Chain
10. Cruiseship Wharf Terminal
11. Transportation Museum
12. Trestle Dock and Jetty
13. Main Street
14. Parking
15. Service Lane



Continuous Waterfront Trail



Main Street with Active Frontages



Urban Beach

both a destination and a navigational landmark. The landform also functions as a restored ecological system supporting pollinators and encouraging informal exploration and play.

8. Regenerative Landscapes – A System of Ecological Renewal

Regenerative landscape areas are designated for ecological restoration and long-term environmental healing. These zones prioritize soil regeneration, native planting, and natural succession processes to rebuild ecological function over time. They represent a dynamic and evolving landscape strategy that strengthens resilience while improving habitat quality and environmental performance.

9. Wetland Chain – Blue-Green Infrastructure Network

A connected chain of wetlands extends through the site, forming a continuous ecological corridor linking upland landscapes to the lake. These systems manage stormwater, improve water quality, and support aquatic biodiversity. Integrated boardwalks and interpretive moments allow for close public engagement with wetland processes, reinforcing the relationship between ecological function and public experience.

10. Cruise Ship Wharf Terminal – Managed Arrival and Interface

At the southeastern terminus of the site, the cruise ship wharf terminal and welcome pavilion is carefully organized to manage visitor arrivals and operational demands. A turnaround facilitates efficient circulation within the gated terminal area, ensuring clarity between public and operational zones.

11. Transportation Museum – A Cultural Anchor of Maritime Heritage

The Transportation Museum is envisioned as a cultural institution that celebrates the site's industrial, maritime, and rail history. It serves as an interpretive anchor within the waterfront, offering exhibitions and programming that connect past and present.

Integrated with surrounding public spaces and trails, it strengthens the site's identity as both a working waterfront and a place of memory.

12. Trestle Dock and Jetty – Preserved Industrial Heritage

The railway trestle, dock, and jetty structures are preserved in place as significant remnants of the site's maritime and industrial past. These features are not accessible to the public and remain fenced for safety and conservation. However, their presence is interpreted through carefully located signage along adjacent public trails, where designated viewing points allow visitors to understand their historical significance and relationship to the waterfront's evolution.

13. Main Street – The Civic and Social Spine

The main street is envisioned as the central organizing corridor of the waterfront, linking key destinations and shaping a vibrant, walkable public realm. Lined with active uses at grade, it supports retail, dining, and community activity while establishing a strong sense of place. Its design prioritizes pedestrians, with a fine-grained urban character that transitions seamlessly between built form and landscape.

14. Parking – Integrated and Discreet Mobility Support

Parking is accommodated through a layered strategy that includes on-street spaces, surface lots, and below-grade structures. This approach ensures adequate supply while minimizing visual and spatial impact on the public realm. Parking is carefully distributed to support walkability, reduce conflicts, and maintain the primacy of pedestrian movement throughout the site.

15. Service Lane – Hidden Infrastructure for Operational Efficiency

A dedicated service lane is located south of the main street to accommodate service vehicles, buses, and trucks. This separation of functions ensures that operational traffic does not interfere with

pedestrian activity or the quality of the main street experience. By discreetly managing servicing requirements, the plan maintains a high-quality, animated, and pedestrian-first waterfront environment.

PROTECTED VISTAS

At the heart of the Framework Plan is a strong commitment to preserving the site’s most irreplaceable asset: its uninterrupted views. The easterly portion of the Pool 6 peninsula, with its magnificent waterfront views, is envisioned as a protected landscape reserve, remaining free from development. Instead, it is maintained as open space or gently programmed public facilities that reinforce public access while safeguarding critical sightlines from the west. This approach ensures that the visual connection between land, lake, and horizon remains a permanent and defining experience for future generations. See **Figure 26**.

INCREMENTAL URBAN GROWTH AND VALUE CREATION

The Framework Plan enables a highly strategic, phased development approach that unlocks long-term value while preserving the integrity of the landscape. The site is organized into four distinct yet connected at-grade and adaptable development blocks, each designed to respond to changing market conditions, environmental considerations, and community aspirations over time.

This outcome delivers up to five times the developable area of Prince Arthur’s Landing while still protecting more than 60% of the site as public open space. See **Figure 27**.

A west-to-east sequencing strategy allows each phase to build momentum and value over time, culminating in the most iconic eastern parcels as the final stage of development. This structure ensures that early investment strengthens, rather than compromises, the long-term vision.



Figure 29. Diagram shows the protected views from the development blocks towards natural features surrounding the site.

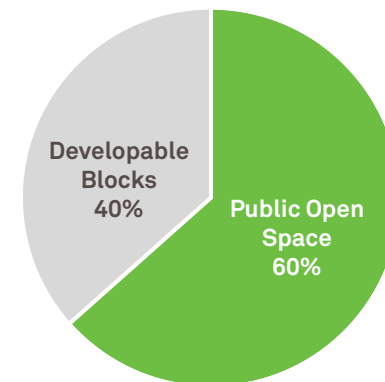


Figure 30. Pie chart showing the approximate percentage of developable area vs. proposed public open space in the Framework Plan

PROGRAMMING THE WATERFRONT: ALL-SEASON ENERGY AND ECONOMIC RETURN

By layering diverse programming opportunities across the landscape—from summer waterfront recreation and cultural events to winter activities such as skating, light installations, and seasonal markets—the Framework Plan transforms the site into a year-round destination. This continuous activation could support a steady flow of visitors and creates multiple revenue streams through events, rentals, partnerships, and destination-oriented amenities. Strategically integrated mixed-use development, complemented by curated public amenities, Indigenous cultural facilities and enterprises, and cultural anchors, further strengthens the site's economic resilience. Opportunities for cafés, wellness experiences, small-scale retail, and event programming should be embedded within the landscape, reinforcing both daily use and destination appeal. Together, these elements position the waterfront as an active economic engine—one that balances public access with revenue generation while maintaining a strong commitment to ecological stewardship and cultural expression.



Figure 31. Artist's rendering of the proposed Main Street (Winter)





Figure 32. Artist's rendering of the proposed Main Street (Summer)



Figure 33. Artist's rendering of the envisioned long-term build-out and one potential massing of development sites



7.0

Potential Development Scenarios



Figure 34. Aerial view of Nordic Spa nestled within a pristine natural landscape, overlooking mountains and the lake



The following two primary scenarios, along with their associated variations, illustrate **four potential approaches** for realizing the Pool 6 Framework Plan. They are not intended to identify **a single preferred option**, but rather to demonstrate **the range of possibilities** and the **flexibility inherent in the Framework Plan**.

This approach allows the City to **remain nimble and responsive** to evolving community needs, market conditions, funding opportunities, and emerging partnerships, while maintaining a clear vision for Pool 6 as a vibrant, cultural waterfront destination.

Collectively, the scenarios show how different mixes of uses can animate the site, support the emerging Cultural Corridor, and create a lively, walkable waterfront village that celebrates Lake Superior, strengthens tourism, and delivers long-term civic and economic value.

To illustrate one possible built-out version of the scenarios, Scenario 2B has been selected as the basis for the illustrative plan, informed by public feedback received through the public engagement process. The following pages present this indicative design scenario to help visualize one potential way in which the Framework Plan could be realized.

SCENARIO 1(A)

Scenario 1(a) envisions Pool 6 as a premier conference, hospitality, and wellness destination, complemented by a residential development that ensures year-round, 24/7 activation. This vision positions Pool 6 as a dynamic hub for visitors and residents alike, combining cultural, recreational, and commercial experiences in a cohesive waterfront setting. The design leverages strategic opportunities across five key blocks, each supporting complementary uses that enhance the overall vibrancy and economic sustainability of the site. **See Figure 30.**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Block A: Hotel & Convention Centre

- A convention centre on Block A could host up to 4,000 delegates which will drive the viability of the connected hotel and adjacent nordic spa use.
- A convention centre could make food, beverage and retail uses economically viable and sustainable on a year-round basis for all 5 Blocks.
- Visitors to the convention centre could also increase visitations to the Art Gallery, Science North and Prince Arthur's Landing.
- The convention centre would require funding from 3 levels of Government.

Block B: Nordic Spa

- Nestled within the landscape, a stand-alone nordic spa on this site would provide beautiful views towards the lake and mountains while creating complementary synergies with the other proposed uses directly connected to the public trail system, reinforcing its role as a restorative, walkable destination grounded in sustainability and landscape harmony.
- Springs are envisioned as a signature wellness destination that celebrates Thunder Bay's heritage while embracing contemporary health and wellness culture.

Block C: Hotel

- Directly adjacent to the Convention Centre with restaurants and retail on ground floor - great views make this a great site for a hotel.

Block D: Residential

- This site could accommodate a residential building, with street level retail facing the main street.
- Most of the block falls within the 'WC' zone, allowing for a simpler rezoning process compared with the adjacent 'HI' zone.

Block E: Public Pavilion

- A small park pavilion at the terminus of Main Street hosts diverse programming and provides ancillary facilities for park programs such as public washrooms.

Figure 36. Scenario 1(a)

	PROGRAM	POTENTIAL HEIGHT (Storeys)	BLOCK AREAS
Block A	Hotel & Convention Center	6-8	5,050 m ² (54,360 ft ²)
Block B	Nordic Spa	2	2,510 m ² (27,020 ft ²)
Block C	Hotel	6-8	4,920 m ² (52,950 ft ²)
Block D	Residential	6-8	4,150 m ² (44,670 ft ²)
Block E	Public Pavilion	1-2	1,250 m ² (13,450 ft ²)

Pool 6 Legend

- Subject Site
- Proposed Blocks
- Proposed Semi-UG Parking
- Proposed Surface Parking
- Accessible Parking
- Gate
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Multi-use Trail
- Proposed Open Space
- Landscape
- Proposed Streets
- Licensed Area
- Water Feature
- Proposed Dock
- Bus Parking
- Proposed Fence
- Proposed Retail at Grade



SCENARIO 1(B)

Scenario 1(b) also emphasizes residential life, wellness, and cultural synergies, while continuing to support major event programming and recreational play. Similar to Scenario 1(a), this concept organizes development across five key blocks, but with a distinct mix of uses and a strong focus on street-level retail and vibrant residential communities.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Block A: Hotel

- A large hotel here would be viable because of the proximity to the cruise ship terminal and the current market needs.
- Directly north of the water park with restaurants and retail on ground floor and great views of the mountains, habitat pond and beyond.

Block B: Nordic Spa

- Nestled within the landscape, a stand-alone nordic spa on this site would provide beautiful views towards the lake and mountains while creating complementary synergies with the other proposed uses directly connected to the public trail system, reinforcing its role as a restorative, walkable destination grounded in sustainability and landscape harmony.
- Springs are envisioned as a signature wellness destination that celebrates Thunder Bay's heritage while embracing contemporary health and wellness culture.

Block C: Hotel & Water Park

- Block C suggests a hotel and water park, broadening the site's programming to attract a wider range of visitors and residents like families with younger children. The integrated hotel could also support the viability of the other uses.

Block D: Residential

- This site could accommodate a residential building, with street level retail facing the main street.
- Most of the block falls within the 'WC' zone, allowing for a simpler rezoning process compared with the adjacent 'HI' zone.

Block E: Public Pavilion

- A small park pavilion at the terminus of Main Street hosts diverse programming and provides ancillary facilities for park programs such as public washrooms.

Figure 37. Scenario 1(b)

	PROGRAM	POTENTIAL HEIGHT (Storeys)	BLOCK AREAS
Block A	Hotel	6-8	5,050 m ² (54,360 ft ²)
Block B	Nordic Spa	2	2,510 m ² (27,020 ft ²)
Block C	Hotel & Water Park	6-8	4,920 m ² (52,950 ft ²)
Block D	Residential	6-8	4,150 m ² (44,670 ft ²)
Block E	Public Pavilion	1-2	1,250 m ² (13,450 ft ²)

Pool 6 Legend

- Subject Site
- Proposed Blocks
- Proposed Semi-UG Parking
- Proposed Surface Parking
- P Accessible Parking
- G Gate
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Multi-use Trail
- Proposed Open Space
- Landscape
- Proposed Streets
- Licensed Area
- Water Feature
- Proposed Dock
- P Bus Parking
- Proposed Fence
- Proposed Retail at Grade



SCENARIO 2(A)

Scenario 2(a) envisions Pool 6 as a dynamic, mixed-use waterfront destination that combines hospitality, cultural experiences, and wellness with active residential life. This scenario organizes development across six blocks, each designed to complement and activate the public realm. By integrating a mix of hotel, market, convention, residential, and wellness uses, Pool 6 becomes a vibrant, year-round neighbourhood that attracts visitors, supports local businesses, and creates strong connections to Lake Superior and the surrounding landscape. **See Figure 32.**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Block A: Hotel

- This significant size site could accommodate a large hotel with street level retail facing the main street.

Block B: Market

- A market on this block offers a flexible space for multiple 1-2 storey structures with food and beverage vendors.
- The market supports economic development and draws visitors from the convention centre and hotel, enhancing activation.

Block C: Hotel & Convention Centre

- This site accommodates a convention centre with an integrated hotel, creating a combined destination that optimizes site use.
- The convention centre is further supported by a large parking lot to the west.

Block D: Residential

- This site could accommodate a residential building, with street level retail facing the main street.
- Most of the block falls within the 'WC' zone, allowing for a simpler rezoning process compared with the adjacent 'HI' zone.

Block E: Nordic Spa

- Nestled within the landscape, a stand-alone nordic spa on this site would provide beautiful views towards the lake and mountains while creating complementary synergies with the other proposed uses directly connected to the public trail system, reinforcing its role as a restorative, walkable destination grounded in sustainability and landscape harmony.
- Springs are envisioned as a signature wellness destination that celebrates Thunder Bay's heritage while embracing contemporary health and wellness culture.

Block F: Public Pavilion

- A small park pavilion at the terminus of Main Street hosts diverse programming and provides ancillary facilities for park programs such as public washrooms.

Figure 38. Scenario 2(a)

	PROGRAM	POTENTIAL HEIGHT (Storeys)	BLOCK AREAS
Block A	Hotel	6-8	5,050 m ² (54,360 ft ²)
Block B	Market	2	2,510 m ² (27,020 ft ²)
Block C	Hotel & Convention Centre	6-8	4,920 m ² (52,950 ft ²)
Block D	Residential	6-8	4,150 m ² (44,670 ft ²)
Block E	Nordic Spa	1-2	1,815 m ² (19,535 ft ²)
Block F	Public Pavilion	1-2	1,250 m ² (13,450 ft ²)

Pool 6 Legend

- Subject Site
- Proposed Blocks
- Proposed Semi-UG Parking
- Proposed Surface Parking
- Accessible Parking
- Gate
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Multi-use Trail
- Proposed Open Space
- Landscape
- Proposed Streets
- Licensed Area
- Water Feature
- Proposed Dock
- Bus Parking
- Proposed Fence
- Proposed Retail at Grade



SCENARIO 2(B)

Similar to the previous one, this scenario also envisions Pool 6 as a vibrant, mixed-use waterfront destination that balances hospitality, wellness, cultural experiences, and residential life. By integrating two hotels, a convention centre, wellness amenities, residential units, a flexible market, and public programming, the site becomes an even more dynamic, year-round neighbourhood that attracts visitors, supports local businesses, and activates the public realm. Each block has been strategically planned to complement surrounding uses and maximize both economic and social activity along the waterfront. **See Figure 33.**

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Block A: Hotel

- A large hotel here would be viable because of the block's proximity to the Convention Centre. The great views make this a highly valuable site.

Block B: Nordic Spa

- Nestled within the landscape, a stand-alone nordic spa on this site would provide beautiful views towards the lake and mountains while creating complementary synergies with the other proposed uses directly connected to the public trail system, reinforcing its role as a restorative, walkable destination grounded in sustainability and landscape harmony.
- Springs are envisioned as a signature wellness destination that celebrates Thunder Bay's heritage while embracing contemporary health and wellness culture.

Block C: Hotel & Water Park

- Suggests a hotel and water park, broadening the site's programming to attract a wider range of visitors and residents like families with younger children. The integrated hotel could also support the viability of the other uses.

Block D: Residential

- A significant size to accommodate a residential building with retail and commercial uses at street level.

Block E: Market

- A market on this block offers a flexible space for multiple 1-2 storey structures with food and beverage vendors.
- The market draws visitors from the convention centre, cruise ship wharf, Transportation Museum, and the hotel, enhancing site activation and supporting year-round economic development.

Block F: Public Pavilion

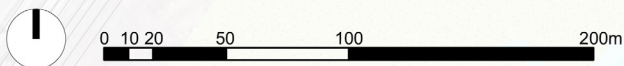
- A small park pavilion at the terminus of Main Street hosts diverse programming and provides ancillary facilities for park programs such as public washrooms.

Figure 39. Scenario 2(b)

	PROGRAM	POTENTIAL HEIGHT (Storeys)	BLOCK AREAS
Block A	Hotel	6-8	5,050 m ² (54,360 ft ²)
Block B	Nordic Spa	2	2,510 m ² (27,020 ft ²)
Block C	Hotel & Water Park	6-8	4,920 m ² (52,950 ft ²)
Block D	Residential	6-8	4,150 m ² (44,670 ft ²)
Block E	Market	1-2	1,200 m ² (12,910 ft ²)
Block F	Public Pavilion	1-2	1,250 m ² (13,450 ft ²)

Pool 6 Legend

- Subject Site
- Proposed Blocks
- Proposed Semi-UG Parking
- Proposed Surface Parking
- Accessible Parking
- Gate
- Existing Trail
- Proposed Multi-use Trail
- Proposed Open Space
- Landscape
- Proposed Streets
- Licensed Area
- Water Feature
- Proposed Dock
- Bus Parking
- Proposed Fence
- Proposed Retail at Grade



ILLUSTRATIVE CONCEPT PLAN FOR SCENARIO 2(B)

To help visualize one possible long-term build-out concept, an illustrative plan was developed based on Scenario 2B, which emerged as the preferred option through the Public Open House and survey process due to its program mix aligning most closely with community priorities. It is important to emphasize that this illustrative plan is intended as one possible scenario rather than a fixed outcome. The framework plan is deliberately designed to remain flexible and adaptable, allowing for future iterations as funding opportunities evolve, partnerships are established, and community needs continue to change over time.

To support a vibrant, all-season, and economically resilient waterfront, the following architectural considerations establish a clear and cohesive design framework that is responsive to Thunder Bay's climate, landscape, and cultural identity:

- **Ensure context-sensitive building massing, forms and heights:** Respond to adjacent landscapes and open spaces by stepping and transitioning building heights to maintain a comfortable human scale while allowing for appropriate intensification.
- **Integrate sustainable building strategies:** Incorporate green roofs, photovoltaic systems, and high-performance building envelopes to improve environmental performance and support long-term operational efficiency.
- **Protect and frame key view corridors:** Locate and mass buildings to preserve and enhance views toward the Sleeping Giant, Lake Superior, and key destinations such as the art gallery. Incorporate thoughtful setbacks and spacing to ensure views remain accessible and celebrated from public spaces and streets.
- **Adopt a warm, durable material palette:** Utilize wood as a primary material, complemented by stone, metal, and high-performance glazing to create a human-scaled, inviting character that responds to northern conditions and ages gracefully over time. In addition, establish a cohesive architectural language through consistent material palettes and design principles, while allowing for diversity and innovation across individual buildings.
- **Establish a continuous and active main street frontage:** Design a fine-grained, pedestrian-oriented streetscape with frequent entrances, transparent façades, and a diverse mix of ground-floor uses that support daily activity and year-round vibrancy.
- **Prioritize activated corner conditions:** Incorporate highly visible, glazed corner units at key intersections to accommodate cafés, retail, and community-oriented uses, enhancing animation, wayfinding, and the overall street experience.
- **Design for all-season comfort and use:** Consider solar orientation, wind mitigation, and weather protection in building design to support year-round activation of both indoor and outdoor spaces.



Figure 40. Artist's rendering of Pool 6 Waterfront as envisioned in the Master Plan Update



Figure 41. Artist's rendering of the Wildflower Hill's Look Out and the Market in the background as envisioned in the Master Plan Update



8.0

Implementation

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

Following formal approval and adoption of the master plan by Council, the implementation strategy establishes a clear, coordinated framework to guide the phased realization of the waterfront vision. It translates the plan from a conceptual framework into a structured delivery program that aligns infrastructure investment, development sequencing, and partnership opportunities over time. In summary, the following actions may be taken as the next steps in advancing implementation of the master plan:

1. Phasing and Implementation Framework

The first step in implementation is translating the master plan into a detailed, actionable, and phased framework. This includes confirming sequencing across the site, identifying catalyst parcels, and aligning development with infrastructure readiness, market demand, and partnership opportunities.

Phasing should be structured to:

- Build momentum over time through early visible success
- Prioritize catalyst sites that activate the waterfront experience
- Ensure infrastructure investment precedes or aligns with development delivery

- Enhance the value and feasibility of subsequent phases through early activation

This sequencing approach ensures that early investments establish identity and confidence, while supporting long-term, incremental build-out.

2. Enabling Infrastructure and Servicing Coordination

In parallel with early implementation planning, detailed infrastructure and servicing strategies must be advanced to support phased development. This includes coordinated planning for roads, utilities, stormwater systems, and shoreline infrastructure.

- Infrastructure planning should:
- Ensure early catalyst parcels can proceed without delay
- Deliver fully serviced development blocks aligned with phasing priorities
- Support long-term flexibility for future growth and adaptation
- Integrate environmental performance and resilience objectives

This coordination is essential to ensuring that infrastructure enables, rather than constrains, the staged delivery of the waterfront.

3. Parcel-Level Development Briefs

The master plan should be translated into detailed parcel-level development briefs that provide clear direction for future development while maintaining design flexibility. Each parcel brief should define:

- Built form envelopes, including heights, setbacks, and massing transitions
- Preferred program mixes, balancing scenarios explored in this document with the evolving community and market needs
- Public realm and interface requirements, including continuous active ground-floor frontage
- Opportunities for spill-out patios and seasonal outdoor commercial activity
- Provision for public art as a key element of identity, wayfinding, and place-making
- Distribution of seating, rest areas, and comfort amenities to support inclusivity and dwell time
- Barrier-free and universal accessibility standards across all streets, buildings, and open spaces
- Sustainability and high-performance design expectations aligned with the master plan vision

4. Delivery and Partnership Strategy

A coordinated delivery and partnership strategy should be established by the City to guide procurement, investment, and sequencing of development parcels. This strategy should position the waterfront as a collaborative, investment-ready opportunity. Key elements include:

- Sequencing aligned with infrastructure readiness and public realm delivery
- Identification of catalyst projects and quick win opportunities
- Transparent procurement processes to engage private sector partners
- Strategic partnerships with provincial and federal governments to support infrastructure and climate resilience investment
- Leveraging funding programs and grants to reduce upfront infrastructure costs and enable early activation

5. Ongoing Stakeholder Engagement and Communication

Ongoing engagement with community members, Indigenous partners, institutional stakeholders, and other key groups should continue throughout implementation to support transparency, collaboration, and shared ownership. A proactive communication program should:

- Provide clear updates on phasing plans, timelines, and project delivery
- Communicate how each phase contributes to the long-term vision
- Build understanding of construction impacts and upcoming opportunities

As implementation progresses, feedback from stakeholders and market partners should be actively integrated to refine design and delivery approaches, ensuring responsiveness to evolving conditions while maintaining overall vision integrity.

6. Early Activation and Catalyst Projects

Early activation is essential to establishing momentum, identity, and public confidence in the waterfront. Catalyst projects should be prioritized to ensure the area is experienced as an evolving and active destination from the outset. The main street spine should be treated as the foundational structuring element of the entire waterfront. Its early delivery will define the character, organization, and experience of all subsequent development. As such the main street must:

- Establish a continuous, tree-lined, shaded, and all-season public realm
- Prioritize pedestrians as the primary users of the space
- Integrate active ground-floor uses and vibrant corner conditions
- Incorporate coordinated streetscape elements such as lighting, seating, planting, and weather protection
- Embed climate-responsive and year-round design strategies
- Seamlessly integrate servicing and multi-modal mobility without compromising the pedestrian experience

7. Environmental, Cultural, and Technical Approvals

All required environmental, cultural, and technical approvals must be secured to ensure responsible and compliant implementation of the master plan. This includes but is not limited to:

- Environmental assessments and impact studies to protect ecological systems and manage risk
- Archaeological and heritage assessments to identify and conserve cultural resources
- Regulatory approvals for zoning, shoreline, and ecological interventions
- Refinement of mitigation and enhancement strategies to improve environmental outcomes and resilience

8. Monitoring, Governance, and Plan Evolution

A formal governance structure should be established to oversee implementation, provide coordination, and ensure alignment with the master plan vision over time. This should include:

- A dedicated steering committee or oversight body
- Regular monitoring of market conditions, phasing progress, and infrastructure delivery
- Evaluation of public realm performance and development outcomes

An adaptive management approach should be embedded into implementation, allowing the plan to evolve in response to market shifts, stakeholder feedback, and lessons learned. Continuous documentation of outcomes will support iterative refinement, improving efficiency, design quality, and delivery success across all phases.



Figure 43. Artist's aerial rendering of the envisioned long-term build-out and one potential massing of development sites

