

SOURCE: Muskoka UAV.





DORSET WATERFRONT PLAN & DOWNTOWN STUDY, DORSET, ONTARIO

PREPARED FOR THE TOWNSHIP OF LAKE OF BAYS, THE DORSET COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP & THE LAKE OF BAYS MARINE MUSEUM & NAVIGATION SOCIETY
June 6, 2016

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The insights and perspectives of permanent and seasonal residents have been invaluable in guiding the development of the Dorset Waterfront Plan & Downtown Study. The Project Team would like to extend a special thank you to local residents for your interest and participation throughout this study. We would also like to thank seasonal residents of Lake of Bays, Kawagama Lake and the surrounding communities for their participation. Finally, this study could not have proceeded without the guidance of key community stakeholders, as well as the support of project partners, including:

- The Township of Lake of Bays;
- The Township of Algonquin Highlands;
- The Lake of Bays Marine Museum & Navigation Society;
- The Dorset Community Partnership;
- FedNor; and
- Various other community organizations.













June 6, 2016

Jennifer Pilon
Economic Development Coordinator
Township of Lake of Bays
1012 Dwight Beach Road, RR #1
Dwight, ON
POA 1H0



Dear Jennifer:

RE: Dorset Waterfront Plan & Downtown Study, Dorset, Ontario

urbanMetrics inc. ('urbanMetrics') in association with our consulting partner, Dillon Consulting Limited ('Dillon'), are pleased to submit the Dorset Waterfront Plan and Downtown Study, which was undertaken on behalf of the Township of Lake of Bays, the Lake of Bays Marine Museum & Navigation Society, and the Dorset Community Partnership, along with the funding partner, FedNor. The Township of Algonquin Highlands has also been involved from the outset of the study.

This study has been undertaken to provide the local community with a comprehensive long-term vision for the waterfront and downtown area in Dorset, with the objective of stimulating tourism, economic development and job creation in the local community. This study has considered both the public and private assets within the local community, and has identified existing synergies and future initiatives to promote tourism and economic development in Dorset and the surrounding regional area, with the objective of attracting new investment and forging new relationships with potential partners.

It is important to emphasize that the recommendations and potential land use concepts presented in this report are only conceptual in nature. This report should be viewed as the initial step necessary prior to investing in further improvements to the downtown and waterfront area. This study has been undertaken to help establish land use options that would ensure future investments are strategic and reflect the input of both permanent and seasonal residents. Simply put, this study is intended to support a coordinated, community-driven approach with respect to future investments that will improve the downtown and waterfront area of Dorset.

We appreciate the opportunity to have conducted this assignment on your behalf and we look forward to discussing the results of our report with you.

Yours truly, urbanMetrics inc.

Peter Thoma, MCIP, RPP, PLE

Partner

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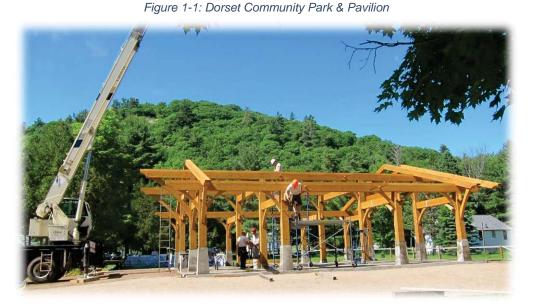
1 Introduction

urbanMetrics inc. ('urbanMetrics') and Dillon Consulting Limited ('Dillon') have been retained by Township of Lake of Bays to undertake a community-based planning strategy for Dorset's waterfront and downtown area, working with local residents, business owners, employees and other stakeholders to create a vision for a dynamic, year-round waterfront and downtown experience. This study has been undertaken in partnership with the Dorset Community Partnership ('DCP'), the Lake of Bays Marine Museum & Navigation Society ('Marine Museum'), and FedNor. The Township of Algonquin Highlands has also had input throughout the study process. Feedback and insights from the local community have been fundamental in establishing a coordinated land use plan for the downtown and waterfront area.

1.1 BACKGROUND

In recent years, through the efforts of the Township of Lake of Bays, the Township of Algonquin Highlands, the Marine Museum, the DCP, and various other community organizations, the local community has demonstrated clear commitment to ensuring a culturally vibrant and environmentally sustainable future for Dorset. Establishing partnerships between local business, community organizations and governments has been central to advancing social, cultural and recreational development in Dorset. Some recent projects initiated by the DCP highlight what can happen when a small community joins together through partnership and collaboration, including:

- the new Dorset Community Park & Pavilion;
- the new Colebridge Park Children's Playground;
- the new Dorset Community Health Hub; and,
- improvements to the outdoor seating along the waterfront.



SOURCE: www.dorsetcanada.com

1

These projects have also coincided with other initiatives undertaken by the Marine Museum, which have helped to promote local economic development, by raising the profile of Dorset as a unique tourism destination. With financial support from private donations and government grants, the Marine Museum¹ has undertaken the following projects:

- the restoration of the SS Bigwin; and,
- the renovations to the Marine Museum.

While there has been considerable progress completed to-date, a cohesive vision for the waterfront and downtown must now be established to maintain and enhance Dorset's future economic viability.

Figure 1-2: SS Bigwin



SOURCE: www.ssbigwin.com

1.2 OBJECTIVES

Building on recently completed catalyst projects noted above, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the opportunities to promote economic development, tourism and job creation in Dorset. The final outcome of this study is intended to be the development of a comprehensive long-term strategy for the waterfront and downtown area of Dorset that helps to attract investment and establish lasting community partnerships

The primary objective of this study is to establish a refined land use concept that reflects the following outcomes:

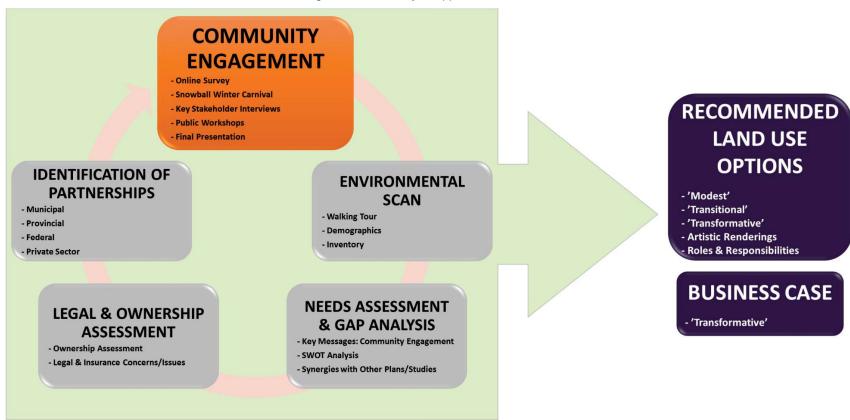
- 1) Enhancing pedestrian connections and walkability between public assets and attractions;
- 2) Promoting tourism, economic development and job creation;
- 3) Maintaining and/or improving shoreline preservation;
- 4) Improving public access and visitation from cottagers and tourists;
- 5) Ensuring that public and private assets are well-positioned to support enduring community-based partnerships; and,
- 6) Ensuring the plan is financially sustainable for stakeholders, including taxpayers.

¹ The Marine Museum is a not-for-profit organization and registered charity.

1.3 APPROACH

Figure 1-3 summarizes the work plan and approach used by urbanMetrics and Dillon in undertaking this study.

Figure 1-3: Summary of Approach & Work Plan



SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc.

2 Community Engagement Overview

From the outset of the Dorset Waterfront Plan & Downtown Study, direct community engagement has been an integral component of our analysis. During February and March 2016, an extensive community consultation process was undertaken, including:

- Community Surveys;
- Information Booth at Snowball Winter Carnival;
- Key Stakeholder Interviews; and
- Public Workshops.

These community engagement exercises were used to encourage widespread public participation and to ensure that local residents and other stakeholders were given multiple opportunities to provide their insights with respect to how the downtown and waterfront area in Dorset can be improved. Input from the local community has been instrumental in helping to identify opportunities to better promote economic development, tourism and job creation in Dorset. The following subsections provide an overview of each community engagement exercise undertaken as part of this study. The key findings and analysis from these community engagement exercises have been used to shape the recommended land use options for Dorset, as detailed later in this report.

2.1 COMMUNITY SURVEYS

A community survey was launched publicly on February 4, 2016 and responses were collected for a period of one month, ending March 4, 2016. As illustrated in Figure 2-1, a total of 772 responses were received during this period, including 363 fully completed responses². This level of community survey participation is considered very high, and particularly for a community of Dorset's size.

² For the purposes of our analysis we have focused on only fully completed survey responses. Approximately 363 of the 772 surveys (i.e. 47%) were fully completed.

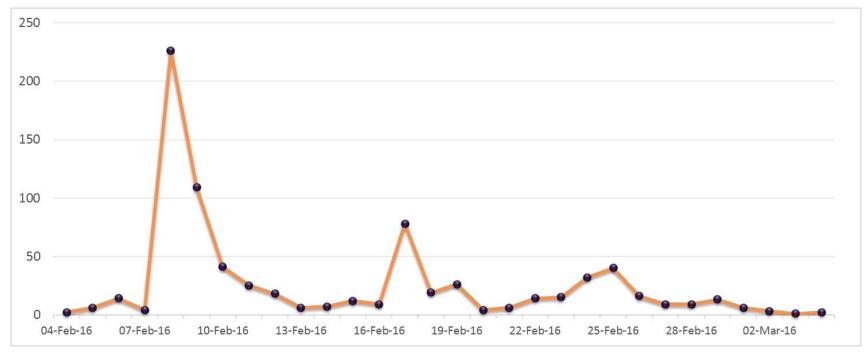


Figure 2-1: Summary Community Survey Respondents

SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc. based on FluidSurveys. Completion rate = 47 %.

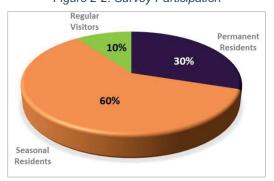
This survey was intended to encourage broad community engagement, including (see Figure 2-2):

- Permanent residents;
- Seasonal residents; and
- Regular visitors to Dorset.

Of these survey respondents approximately 12% identified themselves as local business owners or employees.

The majority of survey respondents completed the community survey online, however, others chose to complete hard copies, which were available in key public locations (e.g. Dorset Community Health Hub; etc.). Surveys were advertised using a variety of methods, including

Figure 2-2: Survey Participation



SOURCE: urbanMetrics.inc. Total responses n = 363.

notices posted in key locations (e.g. Dorset Recreation Centre; Robinson's), announcements at community meetings and events (e.g. Lake of Bays Association), hyperlink(s) on the Dorset tourism website (i.e. www.dorsetcanada.com), email communications, social media posts (e.g. Facebook or Twitter), hyperlinks on Township websites and word-of-mouth. The most effective channels used to inform local residents and encourage public participation were email communication and Facebook/Twitter, followed by word-of-mouth.

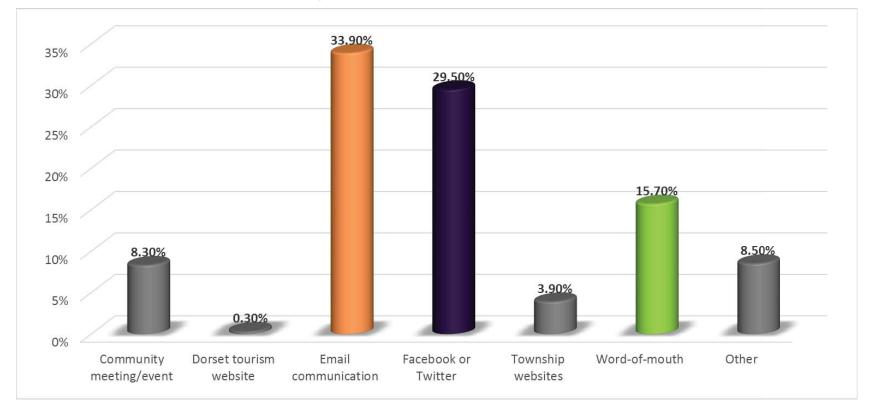


Figure 2-3: Primary Survey Distribution Channels

SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc. based on FluidSurveys. Total responses n = 363.

The community survey provided an initial opportunity to listen to the local community before undertaking further community engagement exercises (e.g. Snowball Winter Carnival; stakeholder interviews; and public workshops) that were used to validate preliminary findings, and build consensus around potential land use concepts.

2.2 INFORMATION BOOTH AT SNOWBALL WINTER CARNIVAL

urbanMetrics had an information booth and interactive exercise setup in the Dorset Recreation Centre for those in attendance at the 26th annual Snowball Winter Carnival on Saturday, February 20th, 2016.

This event was used as an opportunity to meet with the public and discuss the objectives and key outcomes of the study and provided an additional opportunity to consult with the local community in Dorset.

Visitors to the information booth were asked to identify the top investment priority in Dorset by placing "play money" in one of four designated buckets, each of which represented one of the four quadrants of the Narrows, as illustrated in Figure 2-3.

Based on community input from the Snowball Winter Carnival, it was evident that Parcel D, which includes the Marine Museum and former Clayton property is considered the top investment priority with respect to enhancing the downtown and waterfront in Dorset.

2.3 Key Stakeholder Interviews

From February through March 2016, a series of 23 one-on-one interviews

were conducted with key stakeholders from the local community to provide additional perspectives in terms of how to promote economic development, tourism and job creation in Dorset and to gain a more in-depth understanding of Dorset's strengths and weaknesses. These interviews were also used to confirm what we had been hearing from the broader community and identify opportunities to enhance the downtown and waterfront area. Key stakeholders that were contacted for these interviews included:

- Downtown/Waterfront Business Owners;
- Board Members from the SS Bigwin;
- Elected officials from the Township of Lake of Bays; and
- Elected officials from the Township of Algonquin Highlands.

These interviews were conducted to supplement the findings from community surveys in order to confirm major issues and/or challenges facing Dorset in advance of public workshops.

Figure 2-4: Snowball Winter Carnival Interactive Exercise



SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc. Aerial photo provided by Muskoka UAV.

2.4 PUBLIC WORKSHOPS

A series of public workshops were hosted during March 2016 to facilitate transparent community dialogue regarding how to make strategic improvements to the downtown and waterfront in Dorset. These public workshops were used to confirm the initial findings from community surveys and other community engagement exercises/events. These public workshops included:

- 1) Public Workshop 1.1 March 1, 2016 at 2:00 pm in the Dorset Recreation Centre;
- 2) Public Workshop 1.2 March 1, 2016 at 6:00 pm in the Dorset Recreation Centre;
- 3) Public Workshop 2.1 March 22, 2016 at 2:00 pm in the Dorset Recreation Centre; and
- 4) Public Workshop 2.2 March 22, 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Dorset Seniors Centre.

For these workshops *quantified engagement* techniques were utilized to engage local residents and encourage public participation, in order to ensure that our findings and recommendations are representative of the interests of the entire community. Quantified engagement involves liveaudience polling and interactive presentations supported by <u>Turning Technologies</u>. This approach has proven to be a highly effective way to:

- Solicit feedback from local stakeholders:
- Guarantee transparency and provide immediate (real-time)/confidential feedback to participants;
- Provide an interactive and inclusive experience, which provides an equal opportunity for participation (i.e. no elephants in the room);
- Encourage participation amongst a broad range of local stakeholders; and
- Help validate findings and build consensus around specific recommendations.

2.4.1 March 1, 2016 Public Workshops

Although permanent residents accounted for approximately 30% of community survey respondents, permanent residents represented more than half (i.e. 52%) of the attendance at the March 1, 2016 public workshops. There were also a significant number of business owners (i.e. 22%) and municipal staff/elected officials (i.e. 20%) in attendance.

There were a total of 51 attendees at these two workshops, including 31 in attendance at the afternoon session and another 20 at the evening session. More than 55% of all workshop participants indicated that they had already completed the community survey. However, the remaining workshop participants indicated that they were either not aware of the survey, or did not have enough time to complete the survey. Therefore, the public workshops provided an important opportunity to hear new perspectives and connect with local stakeholders who had yet to participate and provide their insights.



Figure 2-5: Public Workshops at the Dorset Recreation Centre (March 1, 2016)







SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc.

2.4.1 March 22, 2016 Public Workshops

There were a total of 39 attendees at the two workshops held on March 22, 2016, including 31 in attendance at the afternoon session and another 7 at the evening session. Many of the attendees from the previous workshops were in attendance at the March 22, 2016 public workshops, however, these public workshops also provided an opportunity to connect with local stakeholders who had yet to participate and listen to their insights. The primary objective of the March 22, 2016 public workshops was to discuss <u>draft</u> land use concepts, which had been developed based on input from the extensive community engagement work undertaken in the local community. Input provided by workshop participants was subsequently used to make refinements to the preliminary land use concepts for the downtown and waterfront in Dorset.

3 Environmental Scan

3.1 GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS & KEY ATTRIBUTES

The hamlet of Dorset was established in the mid–1800's, at the former Cedar Narrows ('the Narrows') on Lake of Bays. Dorset's original function was as a place of trade and commerce (e.g. formerly a trading post, sawmill and gristmill). However, with its scenic location on Lake of Bays and proximity to Algonquin Park, tourism is now the primary driver of the local economy. Dorset primarily functions as a service and tourist commercial centre for the surrounding population of permanent and seasonal residents, as well as the travelling public.

As illustrated in Figure 3-1, Dorset is split between the Township of Lake of Bays (District Municipality of Muskoka) and the Township of Algonquin Highlands (Haliburton County), with Main Street serving as the boundary between the two townships. Figure 3-1 also illustrates the Study Area, which has been the primary focus of this report.

There are approximately 500 permanent residents in the greater Dorset community. However, Dorset also functions as a service centre to a large seasonal population of cottagers and other visitors to the area. During the peak Summer season, the local population in the Township of Lake of Bays is estimated at 18,000, in addition to more than 10,000 in the Township of Algonquin Highlands, including both permanent and seasonal residents³. Seasonal residents play an important role in supporting local businesses, with many local businesses generating 70 – 80% of their annual sales during the peak Summer months.

The hamlet offers a variety of attractions for tourists interested in connecting with the history, character, and natural lakefront setting of the community. Dorset currently offers a range of retailers and commercial services, in addition to a diverse assortment of heritage, cultural and recreation oriented attractions, this combination of existing assets is unique for a community of its size.

LEGEND
Township Boundary
Stage Focus Area
Crock
Partice
Crock
Partice
Proced Partice
Proced Partice
Medical Hub

TRADING BAY

TRADING BAY

Figure 3-1: Study Area

SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited.

³ There are approximately 3,300 permanent residents and 14,700 seasonal residents in the Township of Lake of Bays. There are approximately 2,000 permanent residents and 10,000 seasonal residents in the Township of Algonquin Highlands.

One of the most appealing aspects of the hamlet is the lakefront setting and central focus around the Narrows, which creates a vibrant and engaging atmosphere for local residents and visitors alike. Figure 3-2 illustrates the words that best describe Dorset according to survey respondents.

Potential Docking Attrac Welcoming

Community

Figure 3-2: Describing Dorset Word Cloud

SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc.

Going forward, Dorset's picturesque location, quaint and friendly character, scenic natural beauty and rich heritage will continue to support a local economy based on tourism, recreation and service sector industries. These economic sectors are expected to continue to drive future business initiatives in Dorset and the surrounding regional area in future years.

Based on feedback from the local community, there are a variety of communities in central Ontario that Dorset can look to for inspiration in terms of promoting waterfront tourism and economic development, including:

- Port Carling;Bobcaygeon;
- Huntsville;Bracebridge;
- Baysville;Dwight; and
- Gravenhurst;
 Bala

3.2 Inventory of Existing Assets & Resources

Figure 3-5 summarizes the existing public and private assets in the Study Area⁴. Dorset already boasts a diverse assortment of tourism and commercial enterprises, particularly for a small community in central Ontario. The downtown and waterfront area⁵ accounts for the majority of the existing commercial and

tourism assets in the local area. Along with the recently restored SS Bigwin, the Dorset Lookout Tower, the Dorset Heritage Museum and the Lake of Bays Marine Museum are amongst the most notable tourism attractions located in the downtown and waterfront area. Each of these tourism assets celebrates the vibrant, longstanding cultural and heritage background of the local community.

The range of existing tourism attractions and other public assets in Dorset is complemented by a notable cluster of commercial facilities, which is concentrated in the vicinity of the Narrows. Robinson's General Store, which includes a Home Hardware, as well as a Foodland is by far the largest retail enterprise, and functions as the primary anchor tenant within the downtown and waterfront area. The remaining commercial properties situated along the Narrows are primarily occupied by service commercial uses (e.g. Lake of Bays Marine Museum and Navigation Society; Trading Bay Dining Co.; Zachary's Restaurant / REMAX Muskoka Realty Corp. / Stares Clothing / Johnson's Ice Cream). The variety and critical mass of tourism and commercial facilities in the downtown and waterfront area make Dorset a popular destination for both residents, and tourists in Dorset and the surrounding regional area.

Although there is already a strong concentration of heritage, cultural, recreational and commercial assets concentrated in the downtown and waterfront area, there are opportunities to supplement the existing inventory of public and private assets to further establish Dorset as the premier

Figure 3-3: Bala



SOURCE: Bing (cottageblog.ca).

Figure 3-4: Gravenhurst



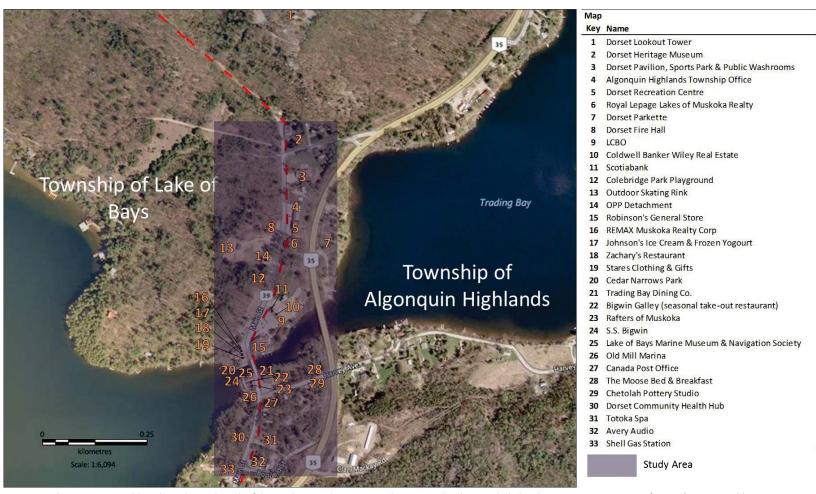
SOURCE: Bing (Flickr).

⁴ It is important to emphasize that in delineating the Study Area for this project we have focused on the downtown and waterfront area in Dorset.

⁵ Which has been the focus of this study.

destination in the Haliburton/Muskoka/Algonquin tourist region. Key gaps with respect to the existing inventory, potential new development projects and opportunities to improve connections between existing assets have been identified in the following section of this report.

Figure 3-5: Existing Inventory Summary



SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc. Although it is located north of the Study Area, the Dorset Lookout Tower has been included in the inventory as it is one of Dorset's most notable tourism attractions and the trails which lead to the tower begin at the north end of the Study area, near the Dorset Heritage Museum.

4 Needs Assessment & Gap Analysis

4.1 KEY MESSAGES FROM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As described in Section 2 of this report, input from the local community has guided the development of the recommended land use options to reinvigorate the downtown and waterfront area in Dorset. The key findings derived from surveys, stakeholder interviews and public workshops have been summarized below⁶:

Seasonality is a major challenge in Dorset. While regular (i.e. daily or weekly) visitation is strong during the Summer, it declines significantly during the shoulder seasons and further during the Winter. Moreover, the majority of revenues (i.e. 70 – 80%) for local business are generated during the Summer season.

Community Survey:

During the Summer, 83% of respondents visit Dorset on a daily or weekly basis Regular visitation (i.e. daily or weekly) falls below 50% during the Fall and Spring and further during the Winter

2	Shopping and restaurants are the primary drawing features . Boating/fueling, tourism attractions and community facilities have also been identified as popular drawing features.	
	Community Survey:	March 1 Public Workshops:
	Main drawing features according to survey respondents:	Main drawing features according to workshop participants:
	Shopping (32%)	Shopping (27%)
	Restaurants (16%)	Restaurants (15%)
	Boating and/or fueling (12%)	Community facilities (14%)

2	Cars and boats are the most common modes of transportation to travel to/from Dorset. Snowmobiles have also been identified as		
3	a common mode of transportation to/from Dorset.		
	Community Survey:	Stakeholder Interviews:	
	The primary modes of transportation to/from Dorset include:	 Lack of docking space during peak season is a deterrent to customers who 	
	Oar (59%)	would otherwise visit Dorset	
	● Boat (22%)	 Adding additional car parking south of the Narrows is a priority – the 	
	Snowmobile (7%)	majority of the existing parking is concentrated at Robinson's	

⁶ A detailed summary of the results from online surveys and public workshops have been provided in *Appendix A, Appendix B* and *Appendix C*.



The improvements that would have the greatest impact on the waterfront and downtown area in Dorset include: (not listed in order)

- Promoting tourism and/or commercial development
- Developing arts and culture
- Shoreline preservation and environmental protection
- Enhancing pedestrian connections
- Improving docking availability and boating accessibility

Community Survey:

The most impactful improvements would be:

- Shoreline preservation (18%)
- Enhancing pedestrian connections (16%)
- Improving docking availability and boating accessibility (15%)

March 1 Public Workshops:

The most impactful improvements would be:

- Promoting tourism and/or commercial development (24%)
- Improving docking availability and boating accessibility (17%)
- Developing arts and culture (15%)

Stakeholder Interviews:

Key improvements that would have the most significant impact on tourism and economic development in Dorset include:

- Adding more docking
- Redevelopment of the former Clayton property
- Fostering collaboration within the community (i.e. businesses, municipal government, local residents, etc.)



The most significant obstacles impacting the future of Dorset, include:

- Seasonality and low population potential solutions include: (1) adding more retail and services, and (2) adding more year round attractions are the best ways to address seasonality and low population
- Quality and variety of shops and services potential solutions include: (1) increasing the variety of businesses, and (2) adding more services are the best ways to improve shops and services
- Quality and variety of attractions potential solutions include: improving marketing and communication is the best way to improve attractions

Community Survey:

The most notable challenges in Dorset include:

- Seasonality and low population (33%)
- Quality and variety of shops and services (18%)
- Quality of attractions (14%)

March 1 Public Workshops:

The best way to address challenges that exist in Dorset, include:

- Seasonality and low population providing more retailers and services (31%); adding more year-round attractions
 (29%)
- Improving shops and services increasing the variety of businesses (35%); adding more services (31%)
- Quality of attractions improved marketing and communication (37%); enhancing pedestrian connections (23%)



The preferred investment priorities from the perspective of local residents and regular visitors are:

- S/W Quadrant (Parcel D) includes public docks along the Narrows, the Marine Museum, former Clayton building and the marine railway used for maintenance on the SS Bigwin.
- N/W Quadrant (Parcel C) includes Cedar Narrows Park, public docks along the Narrows, private property currently used for commercial purposes (i.e. Stares; Zachary's Restaurant; Johnson's; REMAX; former Northern D'Lites Ice Cream).

Community Survey:

Of the four corners of the Narrows, the greatest investment priorities include:

- N/W Quadrant (Parcel C) − 32%
- S/W Quadrant (Parcel D) − 28%

March 1 Public Workshops:

Of the four corners of the Narrows, the greatest investment priorities include:

S/W Quadrant (Parcel D) – **75**%





7

Consensus that the best course of action with respect to Parcel D is to repurpose the former Clayton building⁷ (1090 Main Street) with major modifications.

Community Survey:

The best course of action with respect to the future use of the former Clayton building at 1090 Main Street:

Repurpose the existing building with major modifications (42%)

March 1 Public Workshops:

The best course of action in terms of the future use of the former Clayton building at 1090 Main Street:

- Repurpose the existing building with major modifications (41%)
- Demolish existing building and replace with newly constructed building for immediate occupancy (33%)



There is strong demand for the redevelopment of the former Northern D'Lites ice cream store.

Community Survey:

The former Northern D'Lites property could be put to better use by:

Rebuild the ice cream shop (42%)

Public Workshops:

The former Northern D'Lites property could be put to better use by:

Rebuild the ice cream shop (29%)

⁷ It is important to note that the former Clayton property is currently owned by the Lake of Bays Marine Museum & Navigation Society, and currently occupied by Rafters of Muskoka (i.e. furniture/interior design store) and Bigwin Galley, a seasonal take-out restaurant. Notably, the property has changed ownership a number of times during the past several decades. Potential future uses for the former Clayton property have been discussed in greater detail in Section 4.4 of this report.



Adding new boat slips is crucial to enhancing tourism and economic development in Dorset.

Community Survey:

Docking and boating accessibility in Dorset:

Needs improvement (63%)

March 1 Public Workshops:

Importance of adding new boat slips:

Important or very important (81%)

Stakeholder Interviews:

- Crucial to economic success
- Lack of docking space during peak season is a deterrent to customers who would otherwise visit Dorset

10

Consensus that enhancing pedestrian connections will have the greatest impact at the water's edge and along Main Street. There is also demand for the addition of new trails and pathways in key locations in the downtown and waterfront area.

Community Survey:

Importance of pedestrian connectivity: Important or very important

Greatest priority to enhance connectivity in Dorset:

Enhancing connections between public assets (31%)

March 1 Public Workshops:

Importance of improving pedestrian connectivity:

Important or very important (72%)

Where improved connections are needed:

Along Main Street (33%)

Stakeholder Interviews:

- Opportunity to further leverage trails leading to Lookout Tower
- A boardwalk/pathway connecting to LCBO dock and extending under Highway 35 is needed to improve connectivity and docking capacity



Ensuring environmental sustainability is the top priority with respect to shoreline preservation along the waterfront in Dorset. Maintaining the scenic natural beauty of Dorset is also crucial to promoting tourism in Dorset.

Community Survey:

The key priority with respect to shoreline preservation is ensuring environmental sustainability (63%)

4.2 Overview of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats

Strengths



- Beautiful natural lakefront setting
- Authenticity and good existing balance (i.e. Dorset isn't overdeveloped)
- Diverse inventory of existing public assets (e.g. heritage; recreational; cultural)
- Unique character and charm sets Dorset apart from other communities
- SS Bigwin is a major draw and has helped to raise the profile of the community
- The Dorset Lookout Tower is a key asset that continually attracts visitors
- Important retail hub on Lake of Bays that complements services and offerings of other nearby communities
- Major concentration/critical mass of retailers and services directly accessible by boat
- Accounts for a significant portion of Algonquin Highlands' commercial tax base
- Strong community engagement and event attendance
- DCP is an invaluable community champion (e.g. leadership; fundraising)
- Already a thriving Summer (i.e. peak season) destination

Weaknesses



- Seasonality peak season only lasts 6-8 weeks; shoulder seasons are very slow
- Lack of docking capacity during peak season
- Connectivity to the Narrows and awareness of public docks at the marina
- Municipal parking requirements hinder opportunities for redevelopment
- Septic tank capacity issues constrain opportunities for redevelopment
- Cooperation and collaboration between municipal governments
- No public washrooms and limited public parking located south of the Narrows
- Limited collaboration amongst local businesses (i.e. hours; events; docking/parking)
- Limited new investment and commercial development during the past 15 years
- Low community involvement amongst many cottagers
- Lack of compelling attractions for cottagers "more to do in Dorset 20 years ago"
- People don't stay long enough (i.e. most visitors are in-and-out)
- No casual/fast/cheap food options (e.g. take-out; coffee shop; food truck)
- Recent emphasis on beautification rather than attracting more people to Dorset
- Too much reliance on volunteers and donors to make improvements in Dorset
- Breaks in pedestrian connectivity and minimal way-finding

pportunities



- Adding permanent and/or floating docks to increase docking capacity
- Development of waterfront properties
- Fostering partnerships
- Adding new commercial uses (e.g. coffee shop and/or bakery; art gallery/studio)
- Adding roof to skating rink to allow multi-purpose use (i.e. similar to Magnetawan)
- Construction of SS Bigwin boathouse (for sun protection and year-round storage)
- Relocating marine railway away from the Narrows and former Clayton property
- Offering incentives and/or relaxation of zoning requirements (e.g. severance of former Clayton property for future sale)
- Adding parking and/or public washrooms on the south side of the Narrows
- Embracing the shoulder seasons and off-season (i.e. extending the peak season)
- Leveraging the surrounding natural environment (e.g. proximity to Algonquin Park)
- Introducing new activities and attractions for cottagers and other visitors
- Enhanced community spaces and activities
- Promoting local culture and arts
- Increasing utilization of community park and pavilion (e.g. Farmers' Market; Local Artisans Fair; etc.)
- Improved pedestrian connectivity and way-finding system

hreats



- Seasonality makes it challenging to operate a sustainable year-round business
- Municipal parking and septic issues could jeopardize development opportunities
- Cooperation and coordination between municipalities
- Getting people to work together towards a "greater good" and a cohesive, unified vision (e.g. cooperation amongst business owners and buy-in from the entire community)
- Lack of focus on the big picture (i.e. improving Dorset is a win for all stakeholders)
- Replication of existing businesses or too much emphasis on commercial development
- Managing expectations no single improvement will be a game-changer for Dorset (i.e. the collective impact of a series of improvements will be transformative)
- Municipalities can't be expected to shoulder the entire financial burden
- Revitalizing the former Clayton property is critical to success
- Focusing too much on cottagers, rather than attracting more visitors and outside investment (i.e. spending that is not already flowing to Dorset)
- Too many barriers to accessibility (e.g. docking; signage; accommodations)
- Lack of high speed internet availability

4.3 Synergies With Other Plans & Studies

There are a number of synergies that have been identified between the objectives and goals of this study and strategic planning initiatives that have already been undertaken in Dorset, including:

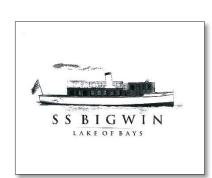
- SS Bigwin Summary Business Plan 2014;
- First Impressions Community Exchange (FICE): Magnetawan's first impressions of Dorset 2014;
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit: Healthy Community Design Tool;
- Algonquin Highlands Municipal Cultural Plan;
- Dorset Community Partnership (DCP) Strategic Action Plan 2010 2015; and
- Lake of Bays Community-Based Strategic Plan.

The following subsections highlight key areas of overlap between the Dorset Waterfront Plan and Downtown Study and recent planning initiatives that have already been undertaken in Dorset. The potential land use concepts presented in Section 5 of this report are intended to reflect the findings and recommendations from the various documents discussed in the following subsections.

SS Bigwin Summary Business Plan 2014

The SS Bigwin Summary Business Plan 2014 ('Bigwin Business Plan') outlines the business plan for the Lake of Bays Marine Museum and Navigation Society ('Marine Museum'). The key mandates of the Bigwin Business Plan as it relates to this study include8:

- Adding to the ambiance and nostalgia of the beautiful Lake of Bays;
- Assisting the local community by creating a destination brand which should help drive traffic to the region and support local business;
- Creating a comprehensive real estate development plan for Dorset;
- Constructing a boathouse in order to store the SS Bigwin during the off season and Winter;
- Expanding fund raising activities to other community initiatives and real estate development projects in Dorset; and
- Working closely with community and government to ensure sustainability of the SS Bigwin.



⁸ Lake of Bays Marine Museum & Navigation Society. SS Bigwin Summary Business Plan. 2014.

First Impressions Community Exchange: Magnetawan's first impressions of Dorset 2014

The First Impressions Community Exchange: Magnetawan's first impressions of Dorset 2014 ('FICE Dorset') was undertaken to provide a baseline assessment of Dorset, from the perspective of key stakeholders from the Municipality of Magnetawan. The biggest challenges facing the local community according to the FICE Dorset report that are most relevant to this study include⁹:

- "Seasonality"
- "Too much of a well-kept secret"
- "Nice place for families but maybe not singles"
- "Accessibility difficult in certain areas for electric scooter/wheelchairs"

The FICE Dorset report also identifies potential opportunities available to Dorset, some of which relate directly to this study, including improvements to connections for pedestrians and bicycles.

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit: Healthy Community Design Tool

The Healthy Community Design: Policy Statements for Official Plans report was undertaken by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit and released in April 2014. This report provides a series of recommendations with respect to policy statements and implementation activities, with the objective of encouraging municipalities to establish various activities, programs and services to improve the health of local residents. The objectives detailed in this study that relate most to this study include:

- Ensuring that the built environment promotes safe active transportation;
- Providing public spaces, parks and greenspace to promote recreation and social interaction;
- Designing roads and transportation networks that support all users (regardless of physical and/or mental limitations);
- Creating a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Ensure a built environment that supports and promotes safe active transportation as a priority travel option; and
- Ensuring natural and built shade features are available at outdoor public spaces.



Policy Statements for Official Plans



⁹ OMAFRA. First Impressions Community Exchange (FICE): Magnetawan's First Impressions of Dorset. 2014.

Algonquin Highlands Municipal Cultural Plan

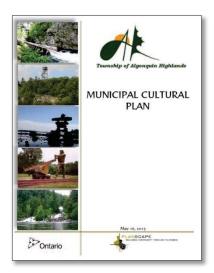
The Township of Algonquin Highlands Municipal Cultural Plan was released on May 16, 2013. The project was jointly funded by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture and the Township of Algonquin Highlands in order to explore opportunities to capitalize on cultural and tourism opportunities. Many of the goals identified in the Township of Algonquin Highlands Municipal Cultural Plan are particularly relevant to this study, including¹⁰:

- Foster Community creating an atmosphere of inclusivity; building partnerships; encouraging local residents to work together;
- Celebrate Heritage showcasing unique history of innovative pioneers;
- Enhance Tourist Opportunities attracting more tourists, who are essential to local economy, pursuing new/relevant tourism opportunities and leveraging existing resources;
- Advance the Arts leveraging the well-known artistic community; capturing the environment and rich heritage; and
- Promote Healthy Active Living promoting opportunities for active living inspired by the natural environment.

Lake of Bays Community-Based Strategic Plan

The Township of Lake of Bays Community-Based Strategic Plan was released in September 2009. The project was funded by FedNor and the Township of Lake of Bays in order to build on the existing vision and ensure that the municipality is committed to a clear set of objectives. The strategies detailed in the Township of Lake of Bays Community-Based Strategic Plan that are most relevant to this study include:

- Engage and communicate openly with the community;
- Develop a sustainable local economy;
- Protect, preserve and promote our healthy natural environment; and
- Work in collaborative partnerships.



Community-based strategic plan or the Township of Lake of Baye

Community-Based Strategic Plan for the Township of Lake of Baye

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Community-Based Strategic Plan for the Township of Lake of Baye

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¹⁰ Planscape Inc. Township of Algonquin Highlands Municipal Cultural Plan. May 2013.

Dorset Community Partnership Strategic Action Plan 2010 – 2015

The Dorset Community Partnership Strategic Action Plan 2010 – 2015 ('DCP Strategic Plan'), which was updated in January 2012, was originally undertaken to foster collaboration between local residents, businesses, community groups and all levels of governments for the betterment of life in Dorset. The general purpose of the DCP Strategic Plan is to improve and enhance the quality of life for all citizens in the Dorset area and facilitate a coordinated approach to community planning.

The objectives from the DCP Strategic Plan that are most pertinent to this study include¹¹:

- Working collaboratively across jurisdictional boundaries for the betterment of the community as a whole (i.e. greater cooperation between District Municipality of Muskoka and Haliburton County, as well as the Township of Lake of Bays and Township of Algonquin Highlands);
- Generating a net/positive benefit for the entire community (i.e. both the Township of Lake of Bays and the Township of Algonquin Highlands);
- Encouraging transparency, collective action and investment in community projects (i.e. ongoing participation and buy-in from permanent and seasonal residents, as well as businesses and community groups, etc.);



- Promoting the business community by supporting existing businesses and attracting new complementary businesses, while also being mindful of the natural environment (e.g. encouraging the continued development of a vibrant arts and cultural community)
- Attracting more visitors and residents by improving information/communication and developing creative ways of generating higher volumes of visitors to Dorset; and
- Oeveloping a means of providing better direction to tourist attractions and community businesses (i.e. going beyond signage).

The DCP Strategic Plan emphasizes the importance of collaboration within the local community, and in particular the need for cooperation between the Township of Lake of Bays and the Township of Algonquin Highlands. There are numerous opportunities for collaboration between the Township of Lake of Bays and the Township of Algonquin Highlands that have the potential to benefit both municipalities.



¹¹ Dorset Community Partnership. Strategic Action Plan 2010 – 2015. January 2012.

5 Potential Land Use Options

The following subsections provide an overview of potential land use options that have been developed in order to enhance the downtown and waterfront in Dorset. These land use concepts have been shaped by the extensive community engagement work and background research detailed in this report, and are intended to build on the abundance of existing assets that already distinguish the local community and make Dorset a compelling tourist destination. The high-level cost estimates provided below are preliminary and require more focused studies, as outlined in Section 9, and detailed design to refine the level of investment.

Section 5.1 provides a summary of the overall land use concept for the downtown and waterfront area in Dorset, which includes a progressive series of interventions, including:

- 'Modest' (i.e. short-term actions; least intervention)
- 'Transitional' (i.e. medium-term actions; moderate intervention)
- 'Transformative' (i.e. long-term actions; most intervention)

Similarly, Sections 5.2 through 5.4 provide **conceptual** images and descriptions of how the properties in the vicinity of the Narrows could be enhanced to promote tourism, economic development and job creation in Dorset. Each potential land use concept is intended to leverage the existing heritage, cultural and commercial assets already concentrated in Dorset, while making enhancements to address existing weaknesses and capitalize on opportunities to promote tourism and economic development.

5.1 OVERALL LAND USE CONCEPT

Dorset is a quaint, friendly and picturesque community uniquely situated between Trading Bay and Little Trading Bay. The overall concept shown in Figure 5-1 builds on the existing charm and community investments, while also improving the pedestrian connectivity between public assets and private establishments, providing additional parking and docking, and identifying initiatives that make Dorset even more enjoyable and attractive to both tourists, and permanent and seasonal residents. The concept presents a high-level set of options that are phased through consecutive improvements reflecting modest, transitional and transformative approaches. All three options explore the use of bike share locations, interplanting of pine trees along Main Street, additional waterfront seating, post banners, public wi-fi coverage and additional event programming and marketing to enhance local sustainability, promote tourism and economic development. Further, these options explore enhancements to the Village gateways that depict the unique Dorset character at three locations: north end of Main Street and Highway 35, Harvey Avenue and Highway 35 and at Highway 117.

● Option 1 – The modest approach, shown in red, illustrates an extended dock at the Marine Museum accommodating additional public docking and a protected and designated docking space for the SS Bigwin. The former Clayton building is restored and repurposed to entice economic development. Multiple pedestrian crossings are envisioned to facilitate a safer pedestrian and vehicular circulation, as well as strategic enhancements to improve pedestrian connectivity, such as the bridge underpass established to connect the Robinson's

docks to Cedar Narrows Park. In the north end of the study area, a pedestrian circuit path is enhanced with context-sensitive way-finding features between key public assets: a formalized natural path between the Dorset Pavilion and eastern trail to the Dorset Lookout Tower, and between the Dorset Pavilion and Dorset Parkette. A designated path with way-finding signs between Dorset Parkette and the bridge on Highway 35 becomes a welcoming gateway from the Little Trading Bay points of access; it provides additional routes to the downtown via Harvey Avenue and a potential mid-crossing to the open space featuring the skating rink, baseball diamond and Colebridge Park. In addition, the southern end of the study area provides a more formal sidewalk and small gateway at the northeast corner of the Main Street and Harvey Avenue intersection, strengthening a safer and more pleasant pedestrian movement to the Post Office, while also being an iconic landmark entering the downtown from the south end. The southern circuit is also enhanced with designated paths and way-finding measures along Highway 35 and Bonfield Street, garnering exposure and economic benefits to other local establishments and artisans in Dorset.

- Option 2 The transitional approach, shown in orange, builds on Option 1 improvements. An extended all-season covered structure at the Marine Museum is envisioned for the SS Bigwin. The former Clayton building front façade is kept as an important heritage remnant and the new building is constructed within the old footprint. Additional docking is made available with the extended dock at the Cedar Narrows Park, and along the new boardwalk south of the waterfront, adjacent to the Marine Museum and former Clayton building. The south circuit is completed with the sidewalk extension across the Post Office to Highway 35. The north circuit is enriched with improved parking and picnicking facilities at the Dorset Parkette, including an underpass connection under Highway 35, between the boat launch and the downtown shops. It also envisions a more prominent potential pedestrian connection and way-finding between the Johnson's establishment and Colebridge Park, as well in front of the Dorset Recreation Centre.
- Option 3 The transformative approach, shown in yellow, builds on Option 1 improvements. An extended all-season covered structure at the Marine Museum is envisioned for the SS Bigwin. The former Clayton building is rebuilt with a new footprint, and additional docking is available at Trading Bay, Johnson's water edge and the Dorset Parkette. This transformative approach presents an additional underpass connection on the south side of the Narrows, as well as enhanced way-finding and path along Main Street in the downtown. Investments are also made to upgrade the existing skating rink with a paved surface and a shade canopy for all-season use. An electrical vehicle charging station is made available in Dorset and additional vehicular parking is also potentially available south of the Main Street bridge.



Figure 5-1: Overall Land Use Concept



SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited.



5.2 'MODEST'

It is a beautiful, sunny day in Dorset and the shops are crowded with tourists who appreciate the additional docking facilities near the Marine Museum, as well as the new kayak and canoe launch on the side of the Narrows. Dorset's charming qualities are heightened with welcoming event banners, colourful planters, sustained white pines and glistening water. It is so wonderful to have multiple water's edge seating options to enjoy ice cream with family and visitors, including the new ice cream shop adjacent to Cedar Narrows Park, or walking along the new underpass to reach the natural tree-shaded strip at Robinson's docks, or on the Trading Bay patio, or along the boardwalk and central courtyard at the historic former Clayton property – so many options! Visitors love learning the history of the former Clayton building and its restoration efforts, while also exchanging the passion for art with the local artisans who are crafting and selling their art onsite. The courtyard is a bustling place in the daytime and evening, featuring many poetry, instrumental and vocalist performances. The community is united with shared successes in the enhancements made to the community, including new tourist-friendly paths and way-finding. Our visitors decide to spend an extra hour or two in Dorset!

Figure 5-2: Precedents 'Modest' Land Use Concept









SOURCE(s): Windermere Real Estate; Katie Bowler; Split-rok Construction; and City of Columbia (Missouri).



Figure 5-3: 'Modest' Land Use Concept



SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited.



5.3 'TRANSITIONAL'

It is a beautiful, sunny day in Dorset and the shops are crowded with tourists who appreciate the multiple additional docking facilities within the Narrows, as well as the new kayak and canoe launch. Dorset's charming qualities are heightened with welcoming event banners, colourful planters, sustained white pines and glistening water. Dorset Parkette has become a natural gateway into Dorset, with beautiful picnic seating under large shade trees and plenty of parking. Community barbecues and bake sales are so popular in the summer time that the event is being held at the Recreation Centre, Dorset Pavilion and Dorset Parkette! It is so wonderful to have other water's edge seating options to enjoy ice cream with family and visitors, including the new ice cream shop adjacent to Cedar Narrows Park, or walking along the new underpass to reach the outdoor mural wall-art and seating at the Robinson's docks, or on the Trading Bay patio, or along the boardwalk and central courtyard at the historic former Clayton property – so many options! Visitors love learning the history of the former Clayton property and admiring the LEED¹² certification and architecture of the new building, while also exchanging the passion for art with the local artisans who are crafting and selling their art onsite. The art lessons and rental-studio spaces at this centre bring residents, tourists and school groups all-year around. The activities often spill out into the courtyard too, which is also a bustling place in the daytime and evening, featuring many poetry, instrumental and vocalist performances. The community is united with shared successes in the enhancements made throughout the community, including comprehensive paths and way-finding. Our visitors decide to spend the entire afternoon in Dorset!











SOURCE(s): Caffeine Witch (Vancouver); Citor For and Associates Inc.; Calgary Municipal Land Company; Janine Marson.

¹² LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a green building certification program that recognizes best building strategies and practices.



Figure 5-5: 'Transitional' Land Use Concept



SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited.



5.4 'Transformative'

It is a beautiful, sunny day in Dorset and the shops are crowded with tourists who appreciate the multiple additional docking facilities within the Narrows, Trading Bay and Little Trading Bay, as well as the new kayak and canoe launch in north end of the Narrows. Dorset's charming qualities are heightened with welcoming event banners, colourful planters, sustained white pines and glistening water. Dorset Parkette has become a natural gateway into Dorset, with beautiful picnic seating under large shade trees and plenty of parking. Community barbecues and bake sales are so popular in the summer time that the event is being held at the Recreation Centre, Dorset Pavilion and Dorset Parkette! The covered skating rink has also sustained numerous sporting events, and concerts all-year around! It is so wonderful to have other water's edge seating options to enjoy ice cream with family and visitors, including the new ice cream shop adjacent to Cedar Narrows Park, or walking along the new underpass to reach the wall-art and seating at the Robinson's docks, or on the Trading Bay patio, or along the boardwalk and central courtyard at the former Clayton property – so many options! Visitors love learning about Dorset's history and admiring the LEED¹³ certification and architecture of the new building, while also exchanging the passion for art with the local artisans who are crafting and selling their art onsite. The art lessons and rental-studio spaces at this centre bring residents, tourists and school groups all-year around. The activities often spill out into the courtyard too, which is also a bustling place in the daytime and evening, featuring many poetry, instrumental and vocalist performances. The community is united with shared successes in the enhancements made throughout the community, including a full circuit of paths and way-finding. Our visitors decide to stay the full day in Dorset!



Figure 5-6: Precedents 'Transformative' Land Use Concept

SOURCE(s): Rebecca Philips; Maori Television; and S. Coronado.

In Figure 5-8, an artistic rendering has been prepared to provide a visual representation of how potential changes to the downtown and waterfront in Dorset in the vicinity of the Narrows could appear according to the 'Transformative' land use concept. A business case has also been prepared to communicate the potential benefits associated with the 'Transformative' land use option based on the findings and recommendations detailed in this report (see **Appendix D**).

¹³ LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a green building certification program that recognizes best building strategies and practices.



Figure 5-7: 'Transformative' Land Use Concept



SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited.



Figure 5-8: 'Transformative' Artistic Rendering



 ${\tt SOURCE: Dillon\ Consulting\ Limited.\ Aerial\ photo\ provided\ by\ Muskoka\ UAV.}$



Based on feedback from the local community it is clear that making improvements to the property occupied by the former Clayton building (1090 Main Street) is a priority in order to advance economic and tourism development in Dorset and the surrounding regional area. More than 75% of those in attendance at the March 1, 2016 public workshops indicated that making improvements to the southwest quadrant of the Narrows (i.e. public docks, the Marine Museum and former Clayton property) was the top investment priority within the downtown and waterfront area. Similarly, 42% of survey respondents indicated that re-purposing the former Clayton building with major modifications was the best course of action going forward. These results mirrored the responses from the March 1, 2016 public workshops, in which 41% of those in attendance indicated that the former Clayton building should be re-purposed with major modifications. Approximately 33% of the March 1, 2016 workshop participants also indicated that the preferred alternative would be replacing the existing building entirely.

There are numerous potential land uses that could ultimately be located on this property, however, there are challenges with respect to septic and parking capacity that will need to be addressed in order for any development to occur. The most viable alternate land uses that have been identified based on community input, include:

1) SS Bigwin Boathouse

Figure 5-9: Boathouse Precedents





SOURCE: www.realmuskoka.com

SOURCE: www.muskokablog.com

2) Food and beverage operation (e.g. café; bakery; restaurant; food truck)

Figure 5-10: Food & Beverage Precedents







SOURCE: www.blogto.com

3) New commercial and/or tourism enterprise(s)

Figure 5-11: Commercial/Tourism Precedents





SOURCE: Rebecca Philips

SOURCE: www.summerwatersports.com

Art incubator and/or gallery space

Figure 5-12: Art Studio/Gallery Precedents







SOURCE: www.thirdlineworkshop.com



The 'Modest' and 'Transitional' land use concepts (i.e. Options 1 and 2) would involve maintaining the existing building, but making major modifications to revitalize and bring new life to the structure, which is currently in need of significant repairs (e.g. repair large hole in roof). In order for the former Clayton building to continue to be operated for commercial purposes, substantial structural and cosmetic improvements would be required. It is our opinion that these structural and cosmetic improvements, in addition to other site considerations (i.e. septic and parking capacity) would significantly jeopardize the financial feasibility of redevelopment. According to feedback from the local community, and recognizing that re-purposing the existing building would likely be cost prohibitive from the perspective of a potential investor, the 'Transformative' land use concept (i.e. Option 3) would instead involve replacing the building that currently occupies the former Clayton property with a brand new structure.

6 Ownership, Legal & Insurance Considerations

Figure 6-1 illustrates the ownership status of the lands which comprise the Study Area. Based on discussions with the respective municipal government, ownership information has also been identified for each property, where data is available. The Study Area is comprised of a mix of land ownership, including property under the control of the following parties:

- Provincial government (MNR and MTO);
- Township of Lake of Bays or Township of Algonquin Highlands;
- Dorset Community Partnership; and
- Private landowners.

The majority of the property within the Study Area is under private ownership, and as a result, legal, liability or insurance considerations associated with the enhancements to the downtown and waterfront area would be the responsibility of the individual land owners.

Properties that are not 100% privately owned may present additional legal, liability and/or insurance issues from the perspective of the Township of Lake of Bays and/or the Township of Algonquin Highlands. These properties include:

- Dorset Pavilion & Sports Park;
- Dorset Recreation Centre;
- Dorset Parkette:
- Colebridge Park;
- Cedar Narrows Park;
- MTO right-of-way along Highway 35; and
- Public docks.

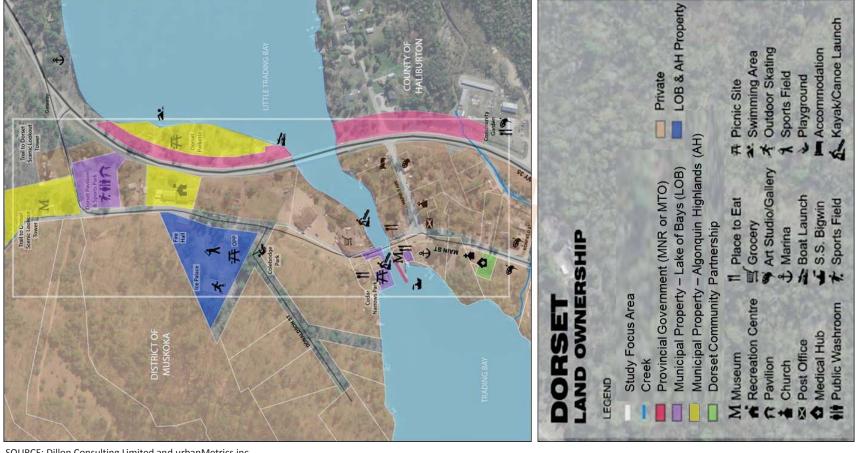


Figure 6-1: Land Ownership Map

SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited and urbanMetrics inc.

Each of the potential land use concepts put forward as part of this study will undoubtedly have implications with respect to legal and insurance liability for various partners. As a result, the two Townships should initiate further investigation of the direct financial implications attributed to each potential land use concept. At this time, however, incremental increases in legal and insurance liability cannot be confirmed without a more formalized plan for the downtown and waterfront area (i.e. the community must decide on a preferred land use concept prior to quantifying changes in legal and insurance liability).

The potential land use concepts highlighted in Section 5 of this report were created based on the feedback from local stakeholders and are intended to build on the 'Opportunities' summarized in the SWOT analysis in Section 4.2. One of the key opportunities included in the SWOT analysis was "adding permanent and/or floating docks to increase docking capacity". From the perspective of both Townships, the greatest increases with respect to legal and insurance costs are expected to be attributed to the public docks proposed in the vicinity of the Narrows. Each proposed land use concept includes progressively more and more additional public docking space situated on both the north and south sides of the Narrows. It is anticipated that the incremental legal and insurance cost increases will be proportional to the percentage increase in docking space, and will be dependent on the final land use concept that is ultimately implemented in Dorset.

Going forward, it is our opinion that <u>both</u> Townships should share responsibility for any legal or insurance liability related to new public docking facilities, recognizing that enhancements to the downtown and waterfront area will result in a net economic benefit for <u>both</u> jurisdictions. Similarly, both municipalities should also share legal or insurance liability related to existing public docks in Dorset given that these infrastructure assets provide access to the community for both jurisdictions and are a driver of economic development, particularly during the peak season (i.e. Summer).

"Development of waterfront properties" and "adding new commercial uses" are both examples of other key opportunities included in the SWOT analysis. Feedback from the local community made it clear that physical improvements to the southwest quadrant of the Narrows (i.e. the Marine Museum; the former Clayton property; and the small adjacent waterfront park) was the top priority with respect to the development of waterfront properties. The revitalization of this property could provide an opportunity for the addition of new commercial uses (e.g. coffee shop/bakery; art gallery/studio). However, in order for this quadrant to be revitalized the Township of Lake of Bays must provide some flexibility with respect to "offering incentives and/or relaxation of zoning requirements" as indicated in the SWOT analysis. For example, the Township of Lake of Bays should consider the merits of severance of the former Clayton property to allow for future sale. Alternatively, the Township could also establish an agreement to combine the former Clayton property with the small adjacent waterfront park owned by the Township, in exchange for a public space being constructed fronting onto Main Street as illustrated in the 'Transformative' land use concept. The real value of the former Clayton property and the small waterfront park would be much greater if the two properties were combined, in terms of both attracting investment and public enjoyment of the waterfront.

7 Roles & Responsibilities

Securing funding from various levels of government (e.g. Federal; Provincial; Township of Lake of Bays; Township of Algonquin Highlands) will be crucial for the realization of an enhanced downtown and waterfront area in Dorset. However, commitment from private partners and local residents will also be necessary in order to make meaningful and lasting improvements to the downtown and waterfront area. As a result, fostering partnerships and collaboration between various stakeholders will be critical to the successful implementation of the recommended land use option(s).

There are a number of examples with respect to how various levels of government could be engaged to help make improvements to the downtown and waterfront in Dorset and create a more supportive business environment. For example, the municipal government (i.e. Township of Lake of Bays and the Township of Algonquin Highlands) could work with private land owners and/or developers to relax zoning bylaws and/or exhibit greater flexibility in terms of accommodating new development applications (e.g. reduced parking requirements). The Provincial and/or Federal government could also be engaged to provide funding for infrastructure improvements, marketing/promotion, heritage restoration and/or other similar projects designed to boost visitation (e.g. FedNor and/or other funding).

While participation from various levels of government will be key in terms of infrastructure/capital improvements, private sector involvement will also be necessary to take on the financial responsibility for the potential development of waterfront properties (e.g. re-purposing/redeveloping of the former Clayton building; rebuilding Northern D'Lites Ice Cream shop), particularly recognizing the significant amount of private land ownership in the downtown and waterfront Study Area.

Figure 7-1 provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the various partners that we anticipate would be involved in making proposed enhancements to the downtown and waterfront in Dorset. However, it is important to emphasize that this is not intended to place any burden (financial or otherwise) on the various partners that have been identified. This table is simply intended to illustrate where buy-in would be required from potential partners to successfully implement elements proposed as part of each land use concept.

Figure 7-1: Summary of Roles & Responsibilities of Project Partners

		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	PARTNERS				
ELEMENTS	ITEMS	Modest	Transitional	Transformative	LocalGOVT	BIGWIN	DCPF	Sr. GOVT	PRIVATE
Programming	Three Additional Dorset Gateway Signs		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		0	<u> </u>	
	New Wayfinding Signage	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	•	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	
	Improved Car and Trailer Parking at Dorset Parkette		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	9		0		
	Enhance Picnic Area at Dorset Parkette	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		0		
	Benches + Street Furniture	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		0		<u> </u>
	Utility Post Banners	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	
	Remove SS Bigwin Rail	<u> </u>	•	<u> </u>		<u> </u>			
	Focus on New Event Development	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	0	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Improve Marketing/Event Planning	<u> </u>	•	•	<u> </u>	0	0	<u> </u>	
	Bike Sharing Station	•	9	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		9	<u> </u>	
	Public WIFI	9	0	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		0	9	9
	White Pine Tree Interplanting	9	0	9	<u> </u>		0	9	9
	Seating Amenities Along Boardwalk	9	0	0	<u> </u>	•	0		•
	Electric Vehicle Charging Station(s)			•	9	9	0	9	9
New Pedestrian	Join North side of Channel and Provide Boardwalk along Robinson's Boat Slips	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		•		<u> </u>
	Join South side of Channel								
	Join Boat Launch to LCBO with Extended Boardwalk		•	•	•		•		•
Downtown	Sidewalk Treatment - Main St at Recreation Centre		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		0		
Pedestrian	Sidewalk Treatment - Main St from Robinson's to LCBO			<u> </u>	<u></u>		0		
Enhancement	Sidewalk Treatment - Trading Bay to Church/Post Office		•	•	<u> </u>		<u> </u>		
	Path - Harvey Ave to Hwy 35		9	9	<u> </u>		O		
	Path - Playground to Narrows (behind Colebridge Park)	<u> </u>	9	9	<u> </u>		O		
	Path - Health Hub			<u> </u>	<u> </u>		0		
	Sidewalk Treatment - Connecting to Pizza on Earth	(<u> </u>	<u> </u>			0		
	Crosswalk Markings	•	0	•	<u> </u>		0		

continued on the following page...

		Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	PARTNERS				
ELEMENTS	ITEMS	Modest	Transitional	Transformative	LocalGOVT	BIGWIN	DCPF	Sr. GOVT	PRIVATE
					I				
Docks/Parking	Repair and Extend Bigwin Pier Dock and Relocate SS Bigwin		9	9		9	9	9	0
	Add New Public Dock Facility (Dorset Parkette)		9	9	<u> </u>		9		
	Support New Dock Space (Robinson's)				<u> </u>		0		•
	Support New Dock Space (Trading Bay)				<u> </u>		0		<u> </u>
	Support New Dock Space (Johnson's)		•		<u> </u>		0		<u> </u>
	Canoe/Kayak Launch	<u> </u>	(<u> </u>		0		
	Add Public Parking south of the Narrows (Trading Bay Dining Co.)			•	<u> </u>		9		•
Structures	Former Clayton Building Repurpose	<u> </u>	•			•	•		•
	Former Clayton Building Replace			<u> </u>	Î	<u> </u>	0		<u> </u>
	SS Bigwin Boat Shelter		0	9		9	0	9	9
	Redevelopment of Parcel C (Johnson's)			9	<u> </u>		0		9
	Public Washrooms (South of Bridge)			•	<u> </u>	9	9		0
	Covered Rink, Concrete Surface and Tree Shade			9	<u> </u>		0	9	

SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc.

Although we have identified the range of incremental improvements that could be embedded within each land use concept (i.e. Modest, Transitional, Transformative) it is important to emphasize that these recommendations are strictly conceptual and are not intended to obligate any partner, business or landowner. As a result, the specific elements that comprise each land use concepts may be subject to revisions and/or an entirely new land use concept may be developed combining various elements (as shown in Figure 7-1).

8 Conclusions

As described in this report, a series of three preliminary land use concepts have been developed based on the insights and perspectives of the local community. It is important to emphasize that these concepts have been prepared for illustrative purposes, and are simply intended to help ensure that a collaborative approach is taken with respect to future investments in Dorset's downtown and waterfront.

The three potential land use concepts reflect the order of magnitude costing and timing of initiatives/phasing of development related to each potential intervention. These concepts have been structured to progressively incorporate more substantial interventions to the downtown and waterfront in Dorset, as follows:

- 'Modest' (i.e. short-term actions; least intervention; lowest cost approximately \$1 million);

These high-level cost estimates are preliminary in nature and require more focused studies and detailed design, to help refine the level of investment that will ultimately be required. Each of these potential land use concepts has been developed to facilitate a coordinated strategic approach to making enhancements to the downtown and waterfront area in order to support the following key objectives:

- 1) Enhancing pedestrian connections and walkability between public assets and attractions;
- 2) Promoting tourism, economic development and job creation;
- 3) Maintaining and/or improving shoreline preservation;
- Improving public access and visitation from cottagers and tourists;
- 5) Ensuring that public and private assets are well-positioned to support enduring community-based partnerships; and,
- 6) Ensuring the plan is financially sustainable for stakeholders, including taxpayers.

¹⁴ It is important to emphasize that these high-level cost estimates are preliminary in nature and require more focused studies, to refine the level of investment that will ultimately be required.

8.1 NEXT STEPS

This study has helped to encourage community dialogue and establish a foundation in terms of how to improve the downtown and waterfront area in Dorset. Building on the findings and recommendations of this study, the <u>next steps</u> required to make various enhancements a reality include:

- Shoreline engineering, costing and geotechnical studies (Options 1, 2 and 3);
- Environmental impact assessment studies for new docks, underpass connections, SS Bigwin structure and redevelopment of the former Clayton property (Options 1, 2 and 3);
- Structural engineering study former Clayton building (Option 1);
- Pro Forma Analysis former Clayton building Redevelopment (Options 2 and 3);
- Suggested/required feasibility and engineering studies (e.g. former Clayton building) (Options 1, 2 and 3);
- Waste water management/sanitary disposal studies (Options 1, 2 and 3);
- Confirmation of incremental changes in legal and insurance liability (Options 1, 2 and 3); and
- Parking feasibility and/or location studies.

It is important to reiterate that the recommendations and potential land use concepts presented in this report are only conceptual in nature. This report is not intended place any burden (financial or otherwise) on the various partners that have been identified. Rather, this report is simply intended to establish land use options for the downtown and waterfront area to ensure that a strategic approach is taken with respect to future investments, and to illustrate where buy-in would be required from potential partners to successfully implement various enhancements.

Appendix A – Community Survey Results

The following provides a summary of the community survey undertaken in February and March 2016. The majority of the completed surveys were submitted online, however, some residents also elected to completed manual surveys, which were available at public facilities throughout the community (e.g. Dorset Community Health Hub; Dorset Recreation Centre; etc.). FluidSurveys was used to support and monitor online surveys. Approximately 47% of the 772 surveys (i.e. 363) submitted had been fully completed.

1. How did you learn about the Dorset Waterfront Plan & Downtown Study?

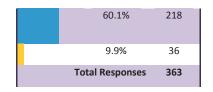
Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Community meeting/event		8.3%	30
Dorset tourism website		0.3%	1
Email communication		33.9%	123
Facebook or Twitter		29.5%	107
Township websites		3.9%	14
Word-of-mouth		15.7%	57
Other		8.5%	31
		Total Responses	363

2. Which of the following best describes your connection to Dorset?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
I am a permanent resident of Dorset		16.3%	59
I am a permanent resident of the surrounding area		13.8%	50

I am a seasonal resident of Dorset or the surrounding area

I am a regular visitor to Dorset



3(a). Do you work, or own a business in Dorset?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		11.8%	43
No		88.2%	320
		Total Responses	363

3(b). You chose Yes, which of the following applies to you?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
I am a business owner in Dorset		48.8%	21
I work in Dorset		51.2%	22
		Total Responses	43

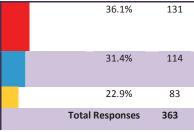
4. To date, how would you describe your connection to the Dorset Community Partnership (DCP) and the community projects they have recently championed?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Very familiar - I am part of the DCP and/or I have been directly involved in recent DCP initiatives		9.6%	35

Moderately familiar - I am aware of recent DCP initiatives but have had little direct participation or involvement

Somewhat familiar - I am only learning about DCP and recent projects now

I am not aware of the DCP



5. When visiting Dorset, what are the three main drawing features?

	1st CHOICE	2ND CHOICE	3RD CHOICE	Total
Beaches/swimming	6 (19.4%)	9 (29.0%)	16 (51.6%)	31
Boating and/or fueling	38 (31.1%)	46 (37.7%)	38 (31.1%)	122
Community facilities (e.g. Recreation Centre; parks)	10 (13.5%)	31 (41.9%)	33 (44.6%)	74
Employment	9 (42.9%)	8 (38.1%)	4 (19.0%)	21
Events/festivals	11 (12.5%)	22 (25.0%)	55 (62.5%)	88
Fishing	3 (16.7%)	4 (22.2%)	11 (61.1%)	18
Passive recreation (e.g. walking; cycling)	22 (23.4%)	30 (31.9%)	42 (44.7%)	94
Restaurants	27 (14.5%)	103 (55.4%)	56 (30.1%)	186
Shopping	189 (74.4%)	43 (16.9%)	22 (8.7%)	254
Tourism attractions	19 (23.5%)	27 (33.3%)	35 (43.2%)	81
Winter sports (e.g. snowmobiling; ice fishing)	9 (14.1%)	23 (35.9%)	32 (50.0%)	64
Other	11 (64.7%)	3 (17.6%)	3 (17.6%)	17

6. How often do you visit Dorset? Please specify your visitation habits by season.

	Never	Rarely	Monthly	Weekly	Daily	Total
Spring	21 (5.8%)	71 (19.6%)	124 (34.2%)	85 (23.4%)	62 (17.1%)	363
Summer	1 (0.3%)	10 (2.8%)	51 (14.0%)	189 (52.1%)	112 (30.9%)	363
Fall	3 (0.8%)	59 (16.3%)	121 (33.3%)	118 (32.5%)	62 (17.1%)	363
Winter	71 (19.6%)	129 (35.5%)	77 (21.2%)	42 (11.6%)	44 (12.1%)	363

7. How do you typically travel to/from Dorset?

	1st CHOICE	2nd CHOICE	3rd CHOICE	Total
Bicycle	2 (4.2%)	20 (41.7%)	26 (54.2%)	48
Boat	67 (42.4%)	75 (47.5%)	16 (10.1%)	158
Car	287 (80.8%)	59 (16.6%)	9 (2.5%)	355
Snowmobile	1 (1.3%)	43 (54.4%)	35 (44.3%)	79
Walk	4 (6.6%)	31 (50.8%)	26 (42.6%)	61
Other	0 (0.0%)	7 (46.7%)	8 (53.3%)	15

8. What THREE words best describe the downtown and waterfront area of Dorset?



9. What are your favourite features of Dorset and why?



10. What aspects of Dorset would you like to see changed and why?



11. Twenty years from now, how would Dorset have changed if you were in charge?



12. Identify the top three improvements that would have the greatest impact on Dorset's downtown and waterfront area?

	1st CHOICE	2nd CHOICE	CHOICE	Total Responses
Adding new community meeting space	4 (16.7%)	6 (25.0%)	14 (58.3%)	24
Bridge maintenance or improvements	28 (33.3%)	30 (35.7%)	26 (31.0%)	84
Developing arts & culture	41 (32.8%)	40 (32.0%)	44 (35.2%)	125

Enhancing outdoor community space
Enhancing pedestrian connections (e.g. trails; wayfinding signage)
Improving docking availability and/or boating accessibility
Linking Health Hub to Marina
Promoting of tourism and/or commercial development
Shoreline preservation and environmental protection
Other

39	63	50	152
(25.7%)	(41.4%)	(32.9%)	
55	62	47	164
(33.5%)	(37.8%)	(28.7%)	
63	47	33	143
(44.1%)	(32.9%)	(23.1%)	
2 (8.7%)	10 (43.5%)	11 (47.8%)	23
40	42	39	121
(33.1%)	(34.7%)	(32.2%)	
75	44	67	186
(40.3%)	(23.7%)	(36.0%)	
9 (60.0%)	4 (26.7%)	2 (13.3%)	15

13. Consider the list of attractions below. During the Summer, which public assets are best positioned to attract people to Dorset?

	1st CHOICE	2nd CHOICE	3rd CHOICE	Total Responses
Cedar Narrows Park	10 (21.3%)	17 (36.2%)	20 (42.6%)	47
Colebridge Playground	3 (14.3%)	7 (33.3%)	11 (52.4%)	21
Dorset Community Park & Pavilion	8 (10.5%)	26 (34.2%)	42 (55.3%)	76
Dorset Heritage Museum	14 (10.8%)	37 (28.5%)	79 (60.8%)	130
Dorset Lookout Tower	211 (67.6%)	68 (21.8%)	33 (10.6%)	312
Dorset Parkette	7 (10.3%)	30 (44.1%)	31 (45.6%)	68
Dorset Recreation Centre	10 (20.0%)	17 (34.0%)	23 (46.0%)	50
Outdoor Skating Rink	2 (11.1%)	7 (38.9%)	9 (50.0%)	18
SS Bigwin	81 (30.2%)	128 (47.8%)	59 (22.0%)	268
Other	11 (25.0%)	9 (20.5%)	24 (54.5%)	44

14. Consider the list of attractions below. During the Winter, which public assets are best positioned to attract people to Dorset?

	1st CHOICE	2nd CHOICE	3rd CHOICE	Total Responses
Cedar Narrows Park	6 (27.3%)	9 (40.9%)	7 (31.8%)	22
Colebridge Playground	3 (27.3%)	5 (45.5%)	3 (27.3%)	11
Dorset Community Park & Pavilion	10 (13.5%)	20 (27.0%)	44 (59.5%)	74
Dorset Heritage Museum	12 (14.6%)	22 (26.8%)	48 (58.5%)	82
Dorset Lookout Tower	25 (35.2%)	27 (38.0%)	19 (26.8%)	71
Dorset Parkette	2 (6.5%)	10 (32.3%)	19 (61.3%)	31
Dorset Recreation Centre	56 (30.1%)	93 (50.0%)	37 (19.9%)	186
Outdoor Skating Rink	169 (61.5%)	80 (29.1%)	26 (9.5%)	275
SS Bigwin	1 (5.3%)	7 (36.8%)	11 (57.9%)	19
Other	33 (50.0%)	8 (12.1%)	25 (37.9%)	66

15. Please evaluate Dorset in terms of the following...

	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	Total Responses
Things to do for adults and seniors	117 (32.2%)	119 (32.8%)	109 (30.0%)	18 (5.0%)	363
Things to do for children	114 (31.4%)	150 (41.3%)	87 (24.0%)	12 (3.3%)	363
Things to do for teenagers	217 (59.8%)	103 (28.4%)	36 (9.9%)	7 (1.9%)	363
Things to do for tourists	107 (29.5%)	113 (31.1%)	103 (28.4%)	40 (11.0%)	363

16. How important is improved pedestrian connectivity (e.g. trails and linkages; signage; etc.) between public assets?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Very Important		45.2%	163
Important		41.3%	149
Not Important		10.2%	37
Don't Know		3.3%	12
		Total Responses	361

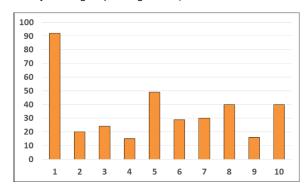
Parcel B. Trading Bay Dining
Co. / Vacant Property to the
East / The Moose B&B

Parcel C. Former Northern
D'Lites Ice Cream

Parcel D. Marine Museum &
Former Clayton Store
Property

47 (12.9%)	81 (22.3%)	192 (52.9%)	43 (11.8%)	363
172 (47.4%)	125 (34.4%)	47 (12.9%)	19 (5.2%)	363
109 (30.0%)	133 (36.6%)	69 (19.0%)	52 (14.3%)	363

17. On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is the presence of government offices (either Lake of Bays or Algonquin Highlands) in Dorset?



2nd

18. Consider the image below. Which parcels require the most attention to improve tourism, economic development and job creation in Dorset?

Parcel A. Robinson's General

Store / Foodland / LCBO

Property

1st



PRIORITY	PRIORITY	PRIORITY	PRIORITY	Responses
35 (9.6%)	24 (6.6%)	55 (15.2%)	249 (68.6%)	363

19. In your opinion, what are the biggest obstacles impacting the future of Dorset?

	1st CHOICE	2nd CHOICE	3rd CHOICE	Total Responses
Cooperation/partnerships within the community	32 (41.6%)	19 (24.7%)	26 (33.8%)	77
Docking capacity	46 (41.8%)	30 (27.3%)	34 (30.9%)	110
Lack of communication	12 (29.3%)	12 (29.3%)	17 (41.5%)	41
Low population	62 (43.1%)	51 (35.4%)	31 (21.5%)	144
Pedestrian connectivity	18 (30.5%)	20 (33.9%)	21 (35.6%)	59
Parking	7 (11.9%)	27 (45.8%)	25 (42.4%)	59
Quality/variety of attractions	23 (16.2%)	73 (51.4%)	46 (32.4%)	142
Quality/variety of shops and services	65 (33.9%)	67 (34.9%)	60 (31.2%)	192
Seasonality	78 (39.2%)	50 (25.1%)	71 (35.7%)	199
Other	11 (52.4%)	2 (9.5%)	8 (38.1%)	21

20. The former Clayton building at 1090 Main Street is currently owned by the Lake of Bays Marine Museum and Navigation Society. In your opinion, how could this property be put to better use?

	1st CHOICE	2nd CHOICE	3rd CHOICE	Total Responses
Accommodations (i.e. B&B or Guest House)	35 (31.5%)	32 (28.8%)	44 (39.6%)	111
Art gallery and/or studio	42 (24.6%)	78 (45.6%)	51 (29.8%)	171
Combination of SS Bigwin boathouse/restaurant	165 (66.0%)	63 (25.2%)	22 (8.8%)	250
Convert to boathouse for SS Bigwin	10 (20.4%)	22 (44.9%)	17 (34.7%)	49
New commercial tenant(s)	47 (26.6%)	69 (39.0%)	61 (34.5%)	177
New tourism attraction	26 (15.7%)	58 (34.9%)	82 (49.4%)	166
Public/community use	14 (19.7%)	16 (22.5%)	41 (57.7%)	71
Other	18 (58.1%)	2 (6.5%)	11 (35.5%)	31

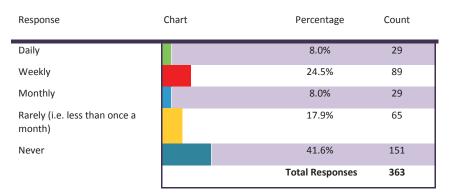
21. In your opinion, what is the best course of action with respect to the former Clayton property at 1090 Main Street?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Leave the building as-is (some minor modifications)		22.9%	83
Re-purpose the building (with major modifications)		41.9%	152
Demolish the building and clear for use as public open space		6.6%	24
Demolish the building and replace with newly constructed building for immediate occupancy		13.2%	48
Demolish the building to clear the entire property for sale/future development		7.7%	28
Other		7.7%	28
		Total Responses	363

22. In your opinion, how could the property formerly occupied by Northern D'Lites Ice Cream Shop at 1070 Main Street be put to better use?

	1st CHOICE	2nd CHOICE	3rd CHOICE	Total Responses
Accommodations (i.e. B&B or Guest House)	11 (21.6%)	16 (31.4%)	24 (47.1%)	51
Art gallery and/or studio	21 (15.8%)	51 (38.3%)	61 (45.9%)	133
New commercial tenant(s)	54 (28.9%)	78 (41.7%)	55 (29.4%)	187
New tourism attraction	22 (12.0%)	93 (50.5%)	69 (37.5%)	184
Public/community use	30 (25.9%)	43 (37.1%)	43 (37.1%)	116
Rebuild ice-cream shop	206 (72.3%)	37 (13.0%)	42 (14.7%)	285
Other	17 (45.9%)	2 (5.4%)	18 (48.6%)	37

23(a). During the boating season, how often do you access Dorset by boat?

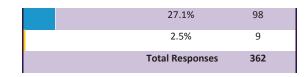


23(b). How would you rate docking and boating accessibility in Dorset?

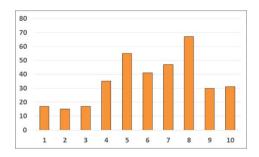
_	-		-	
Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	Total Responses

Number of boat slips	134 (62.9%)	57 (26.8%)	22 (10.3%)	0 (0.0%)	213
Connection between docks and Main Street	55 (25.8%)	90 (42.3%)	53 (24.9%)	15 (7.0%)	213
Proximity to public assets	26 (12.3%)	94 (44.5%)	73 (34.6%)	18 (8.5%)	211
Proximity to private assets	13 (6.3%)	108 (52.4%)	69 (33.5%)	16 (7.8%)	206
Safe navigation and approach to boat launch	54 (25.6%)	98 (46.4%)	51 (24.2%)	8 (3.8%)	211

Between 1 and 3 hours More than 3 hours



26. On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate Dorset as a pedestrian-friendly community?



24. How often do you access Dorset by car?

Response	Chart	Percentag	e Count
Never		0.6%	2
Rarely (i.e. less than once a month)	8.3%		30
Monthly		19.6%	71
Weekly		46.0%	167
Daily		25.6%	93
		Total Respor	nses 363

27. Would improved pedestrian connections increase your visitation to Dorset?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Yes		31.6%	114
No		42.7%	154
Don't Know		25.8%	93
		Total Responses	361

25. When visiting Dorset, how long do you typically spend in the downtown and waterfront area?

Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
30 minutes or less		15.7%	57
Between 30 minutes and 1 hour		54.7%	198

28. What is the greatest priority to enhance connectivity in Dorset's downtown and waterfront area?

	1st CHOICE	2nd CHOICE	3rd CHOICE	Total Responses
Adding more docking slips	99 (55.9%)	35 (19.8%)	43 (24.3%)	177
Adding trail(s) to connect Marina to Health Hub and remainder of the downtown/waterfront area	66 (28.2%)	86 (36.8%)	82 (35.0%)	234

Adding signage to help locate public and private assets

Enhancing connections between public assets (e.g. Dorset Lookout Tower; Recreation Centre; Community Park/Pavilion; etc.)

Improving navigability of Cedar Narrows

Other

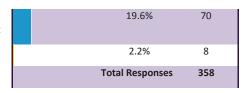
50 (23.9%)	84 (40.2%)	75 (35.9%)	209
123 (42.7%)	103 (35.8%)	62 (21.5%)	288
10 (11.4%)	34 (38.6%)	44 (50.0%)	88
11 (33.3%)	3 (9.1%)	19 (57.6%)	33

29. What is the key priority with respect to shoreline preservation in Dorset?

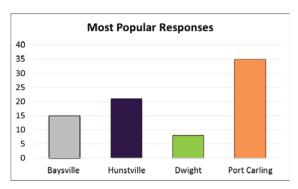
Response	Chart	Percentage	Count
Enhancing public access		15.4%	55
Ensuring environmental sustainability		62.8%	225

Providing more opportunities for commercial and/or tourism development

Other

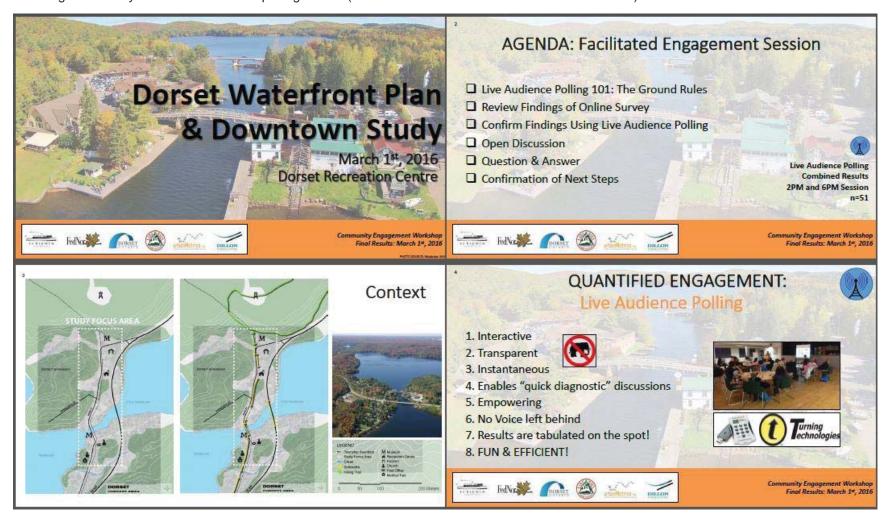


30. What communities have you recently visited that set a good example for Dorset?

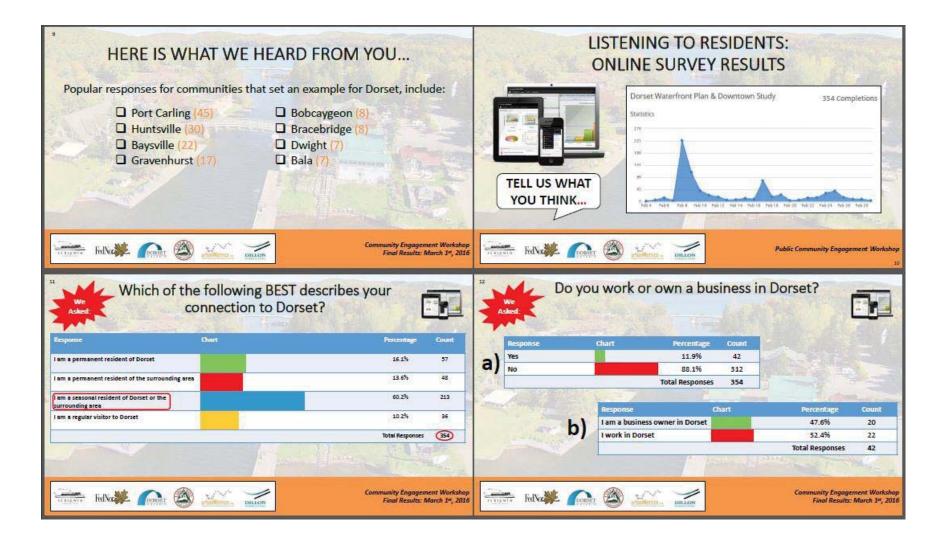


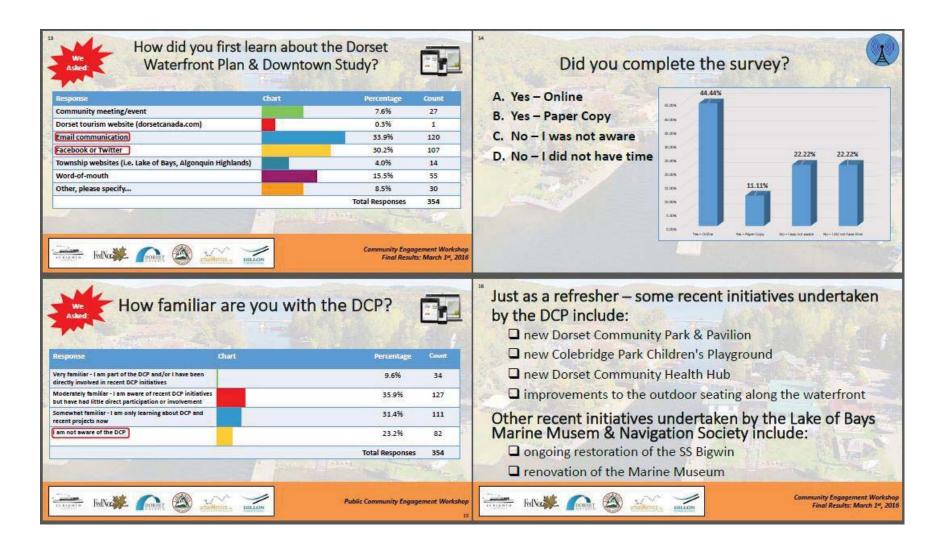
Appendix B – Public Workshop 1.1 & 1.2 Live Polling Results

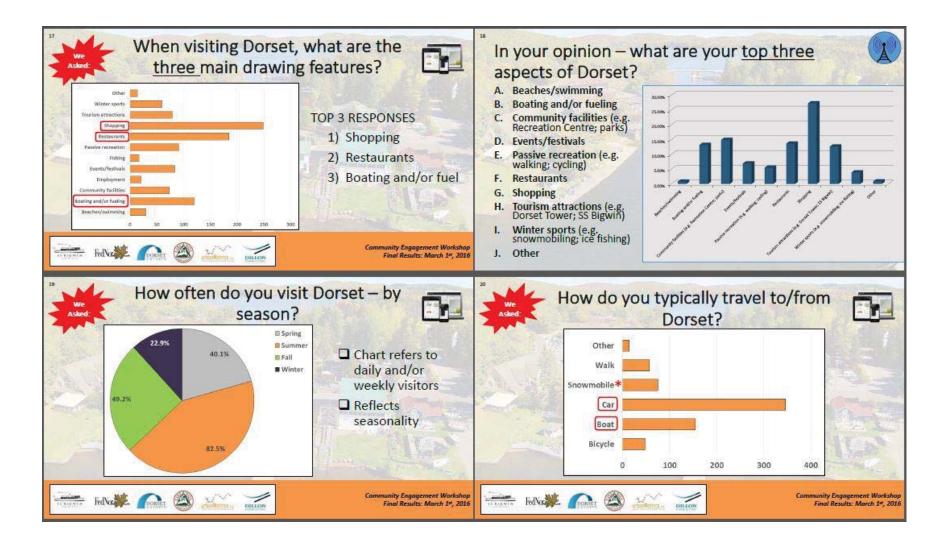
The following provides an overview of the public workshops hosted on March 1, 2016 at the Dorset Recreation Centre (2:00 pm and 6:00 pm), including a summary of the combined live-polling results (total of 51 attendees at both sessions combined).

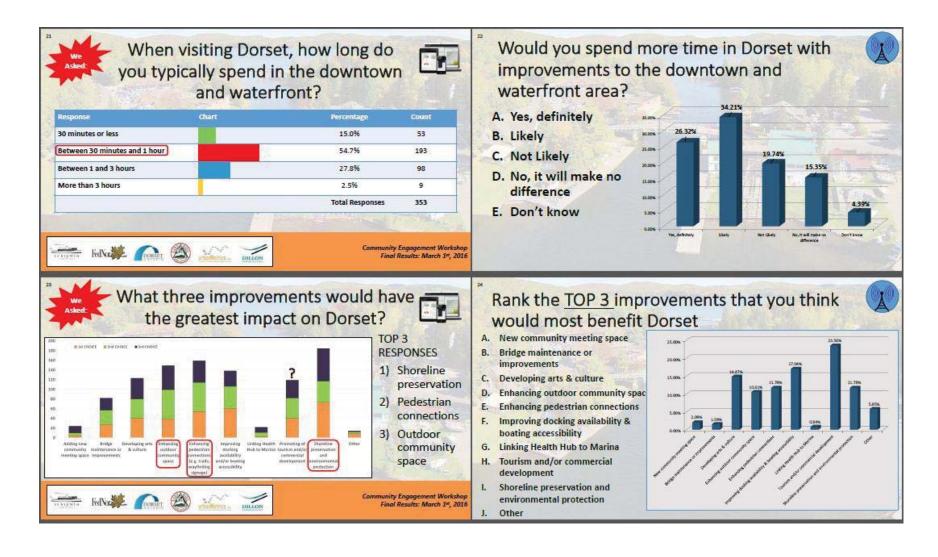


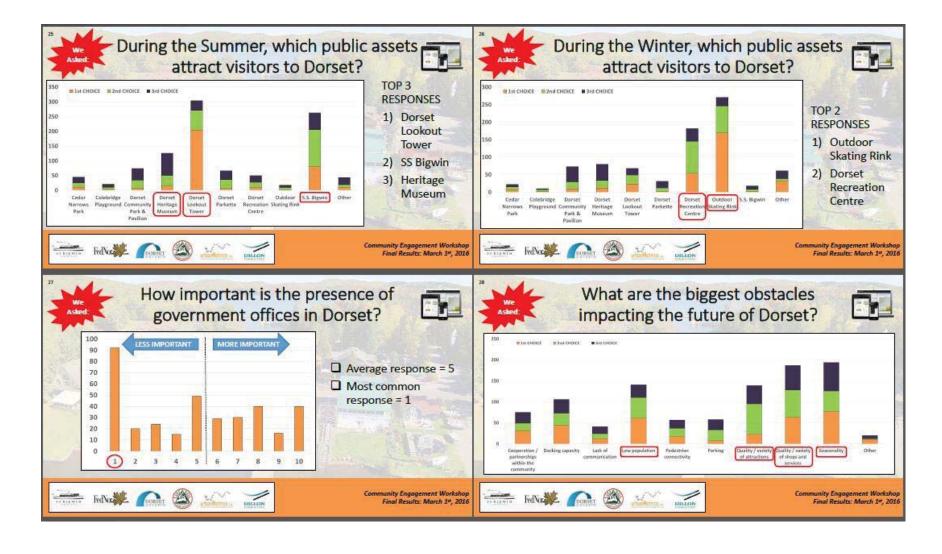


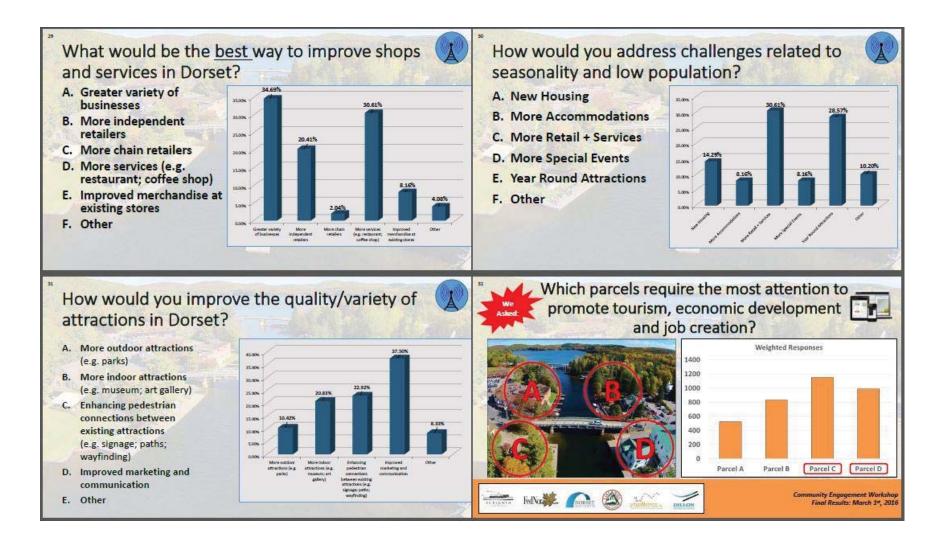


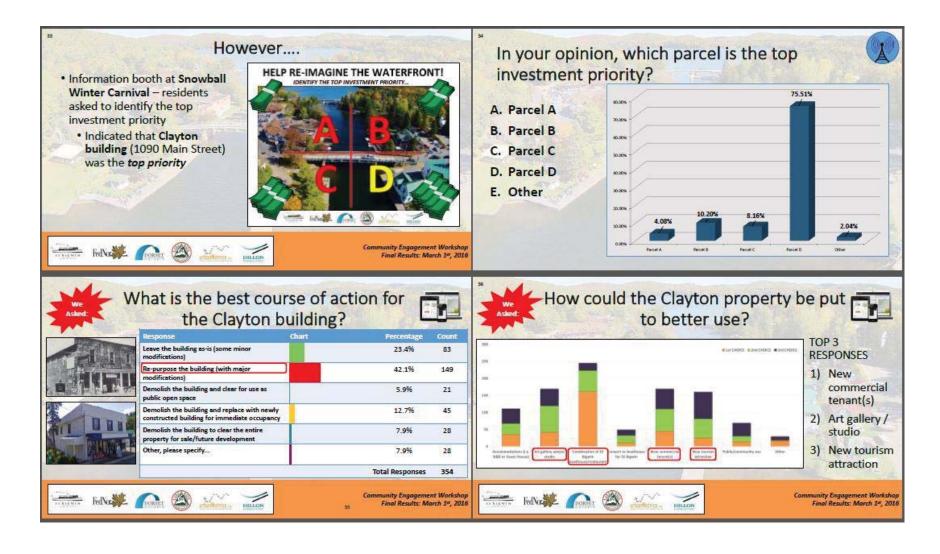


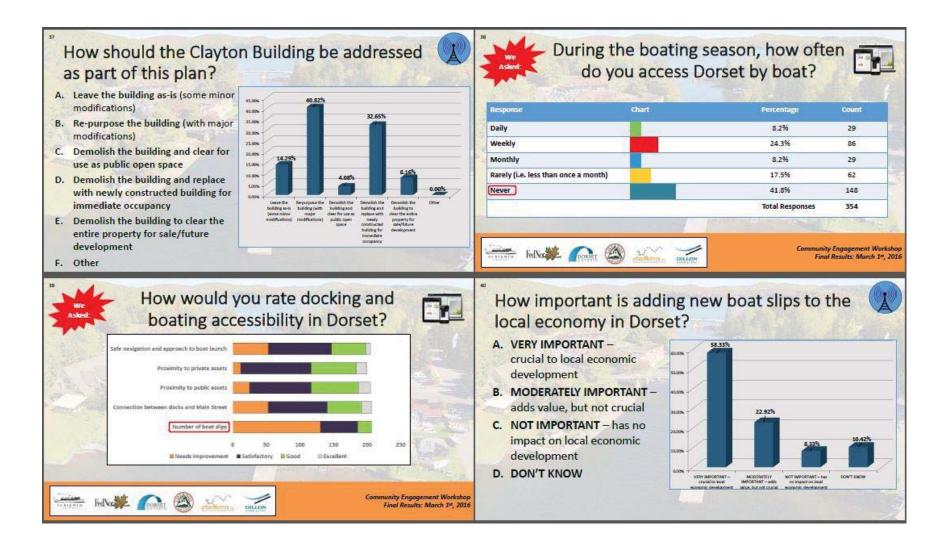


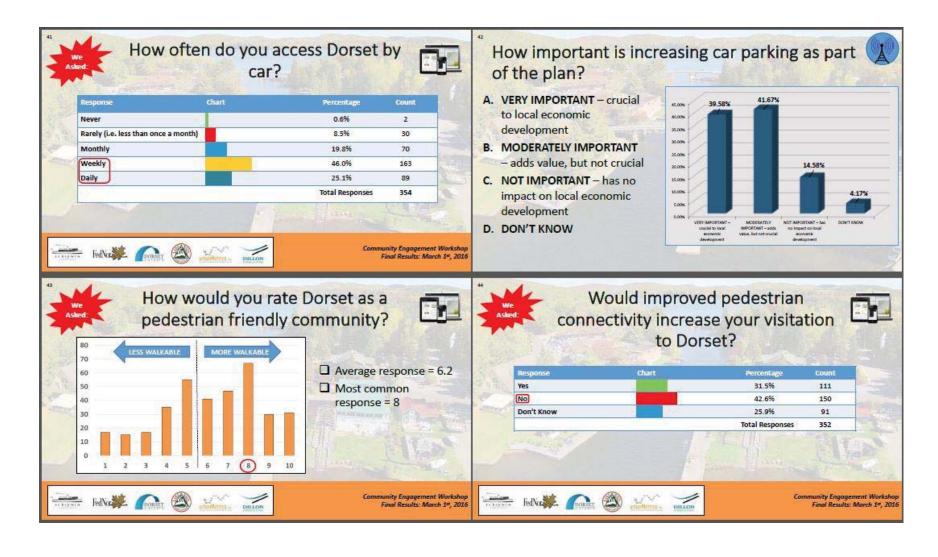


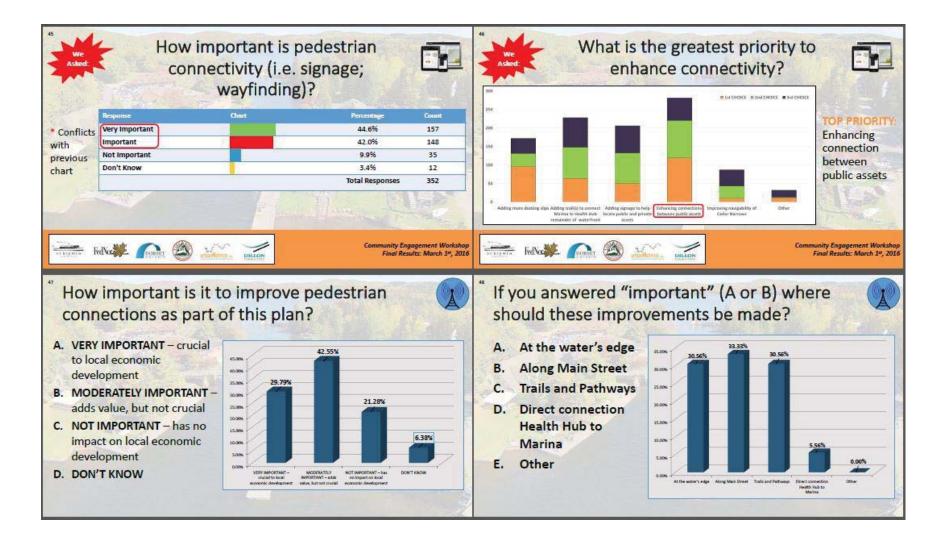


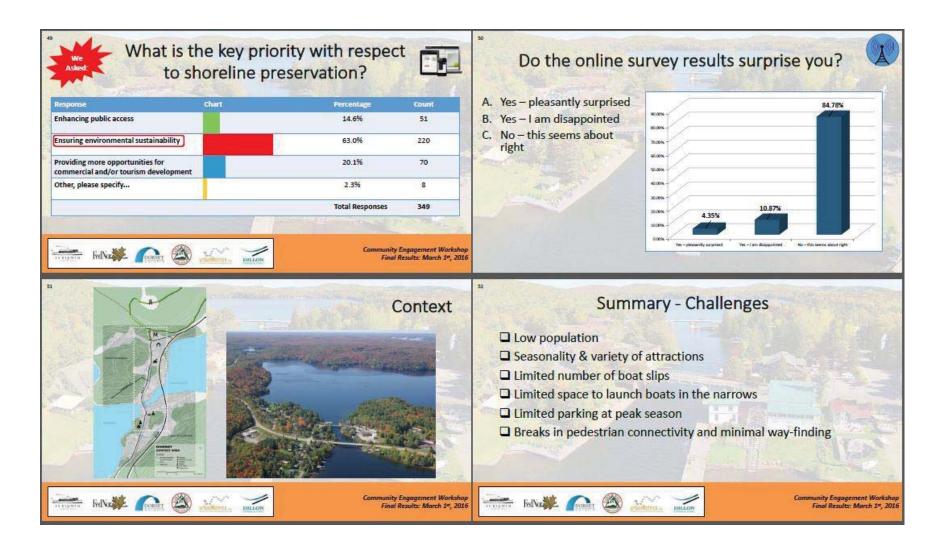


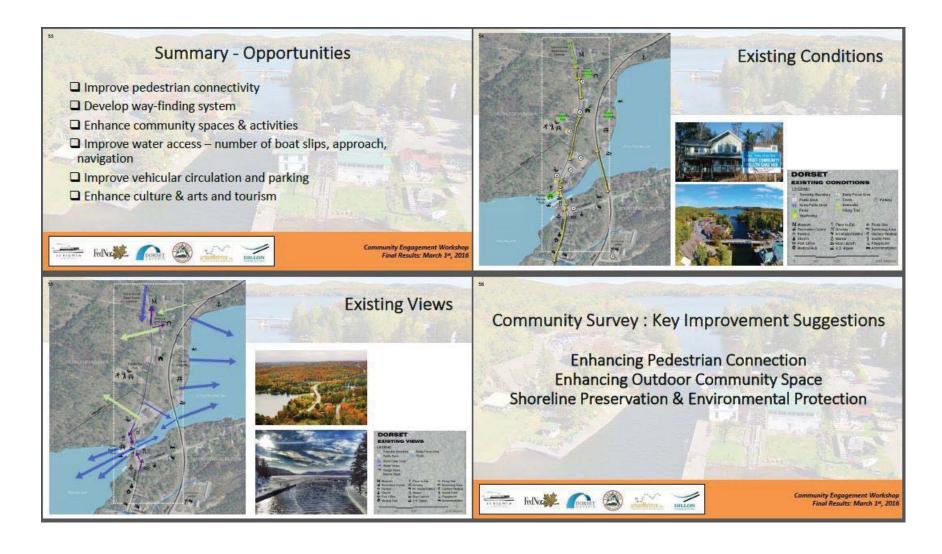


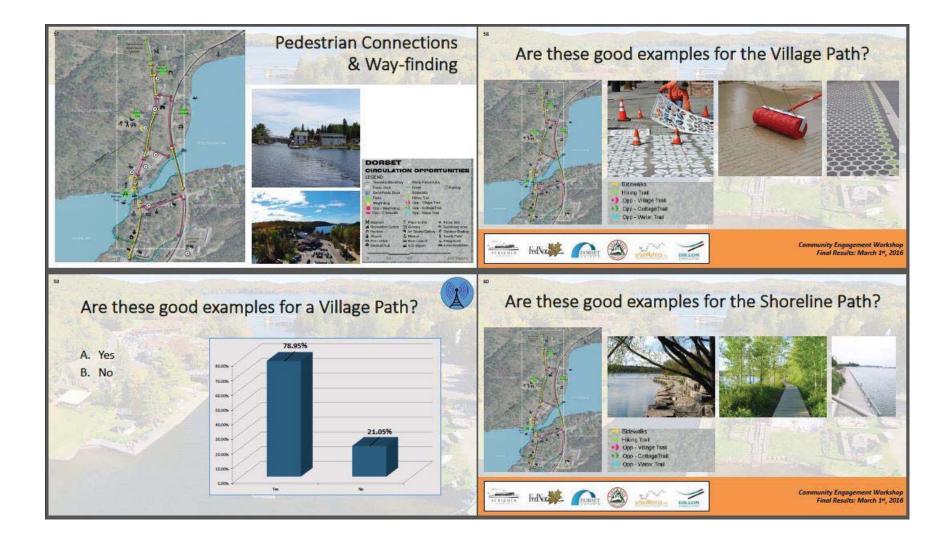






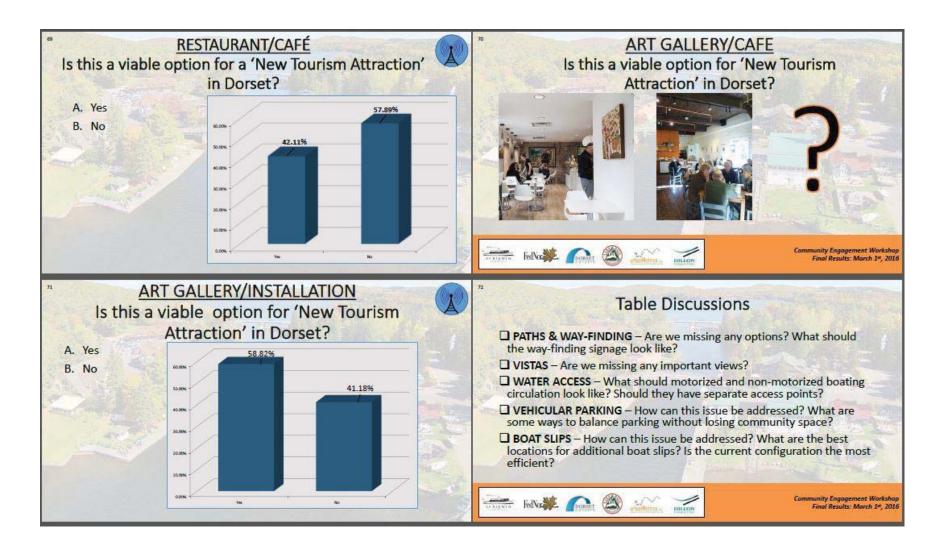


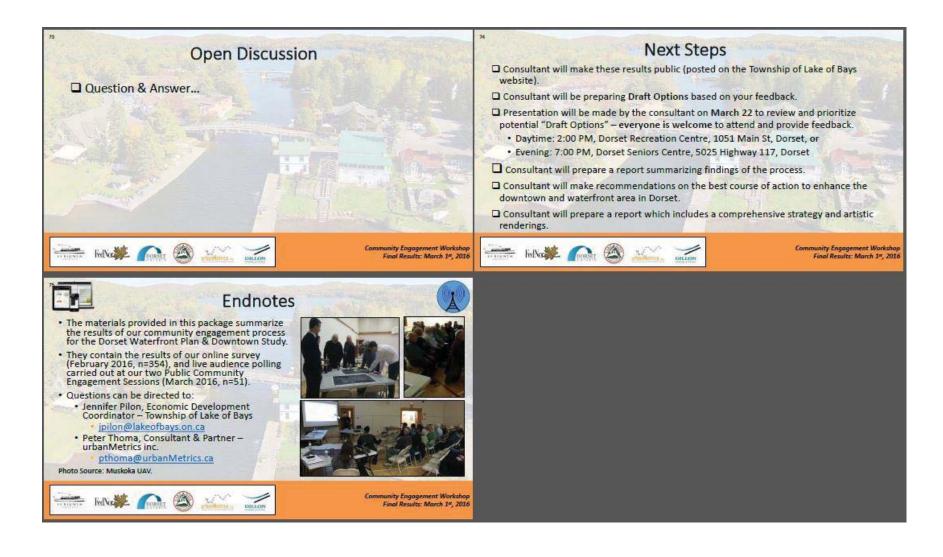






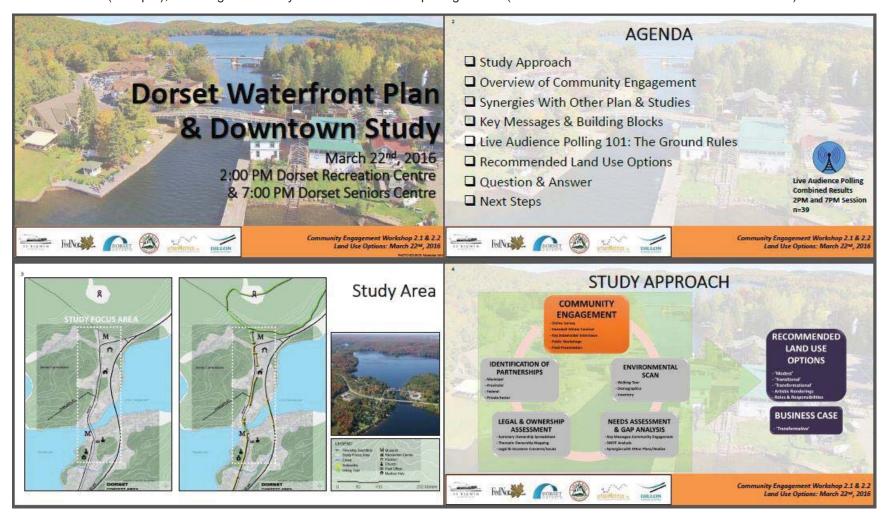




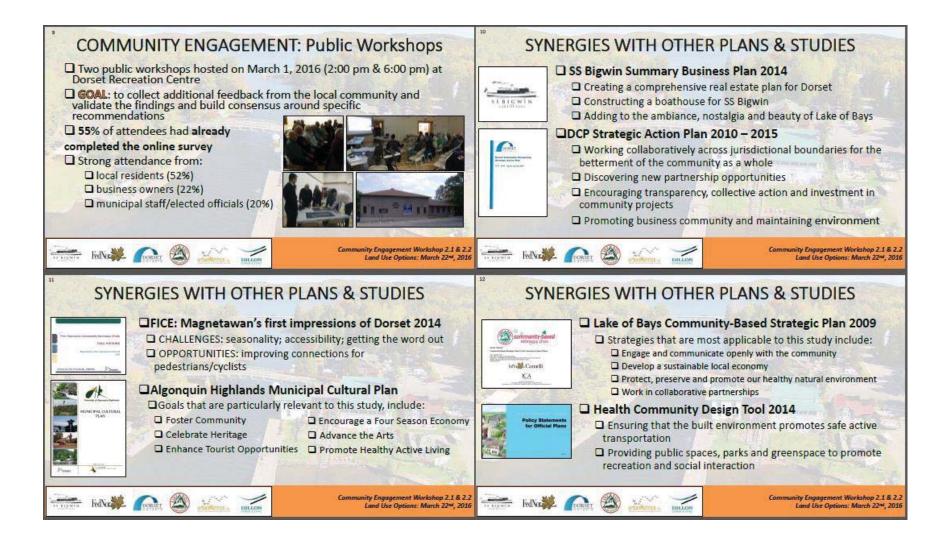


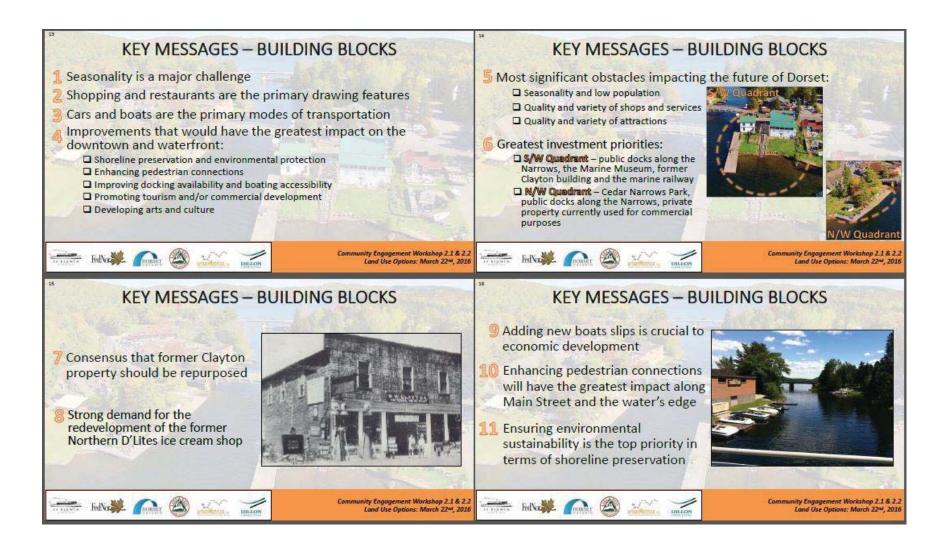
Appendix C – Public Workshop 2.1 & 2.2 Live Polling Results

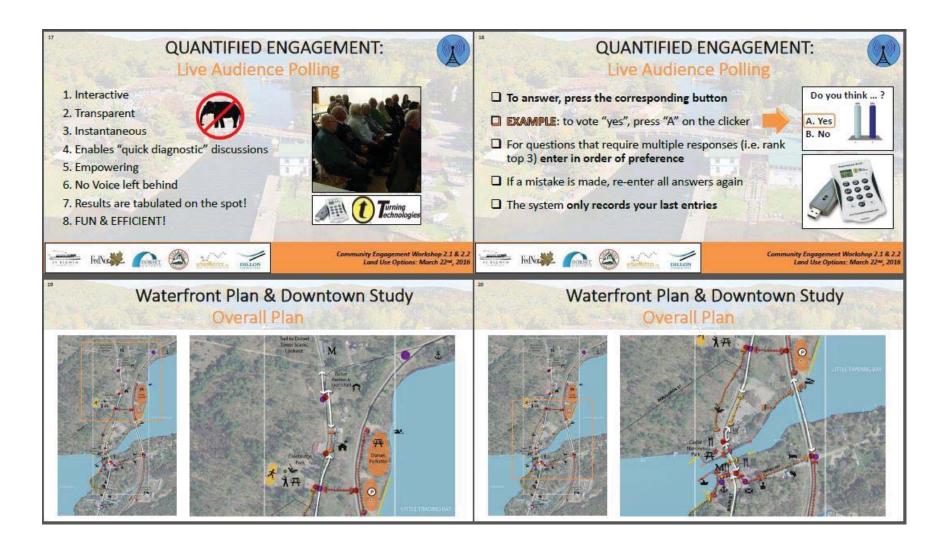
The following provides an overview of the public workshops hosted on March 22, 2016 at the Dorset Recreation Centre (2:00 pm) and the Dorset Seniors' Centre (7:00 pm), including a summary of the combined live-polling results (total of 39 attendees at both sessions combined).

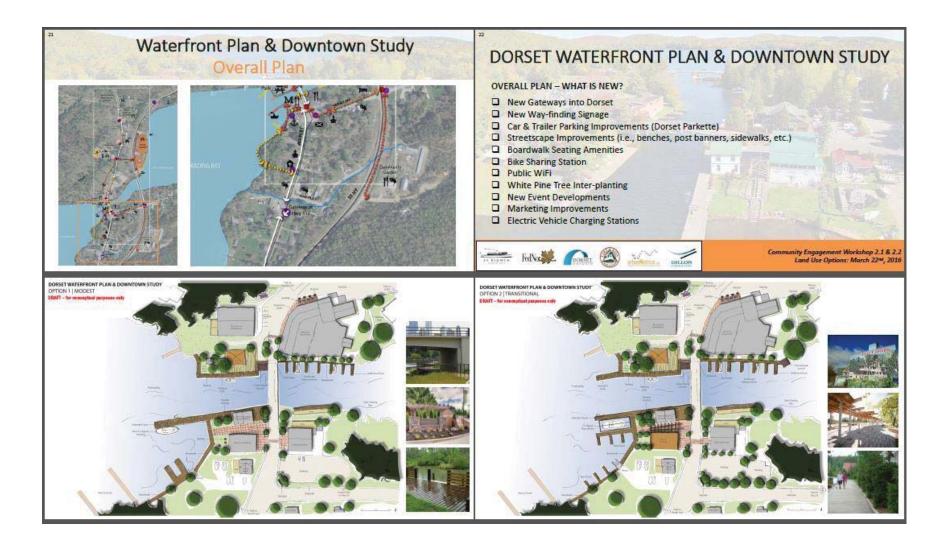


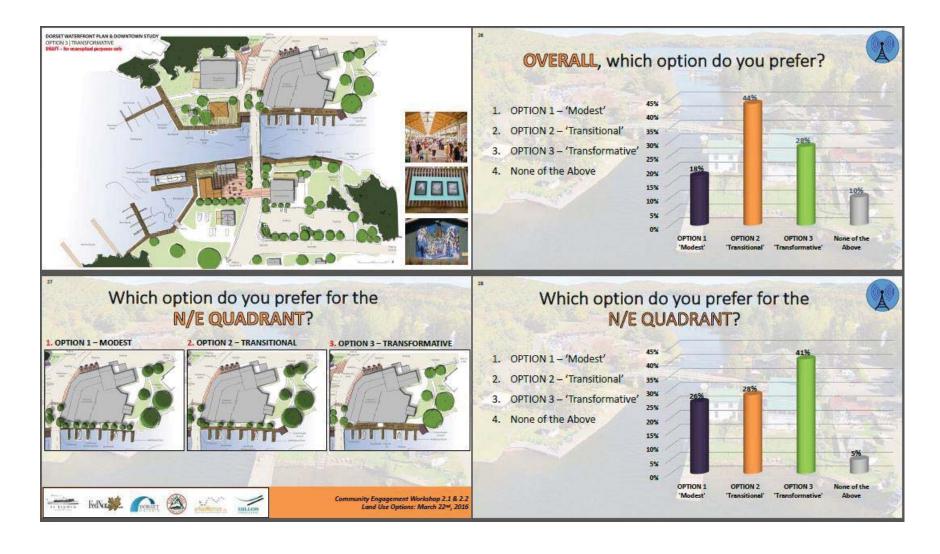


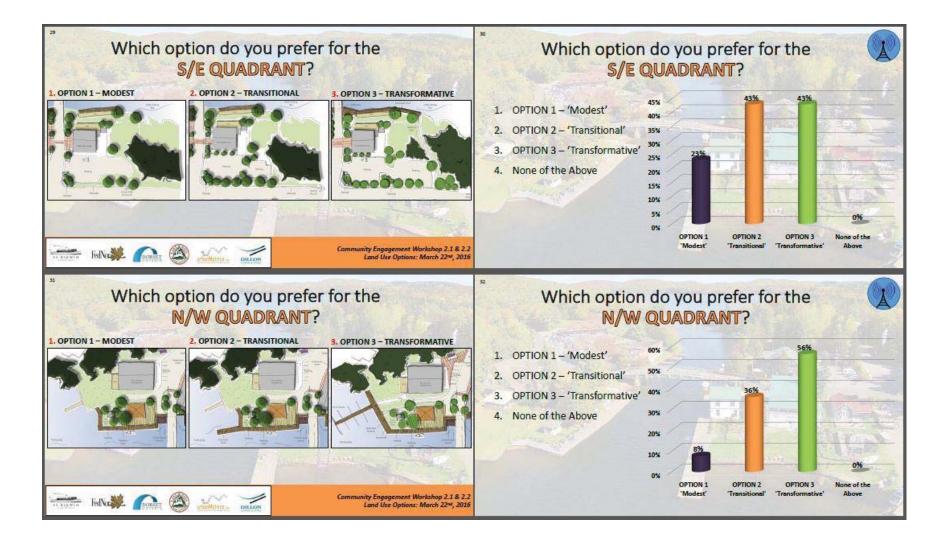


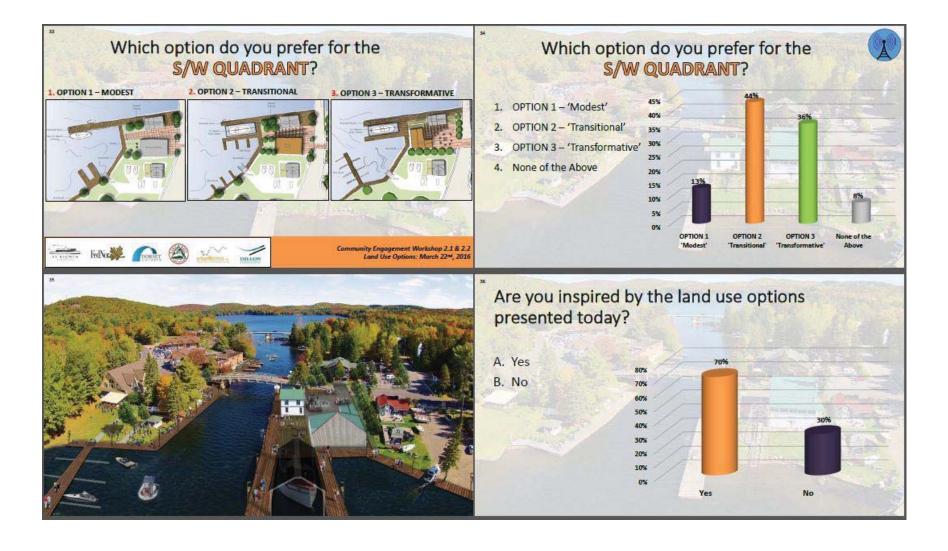


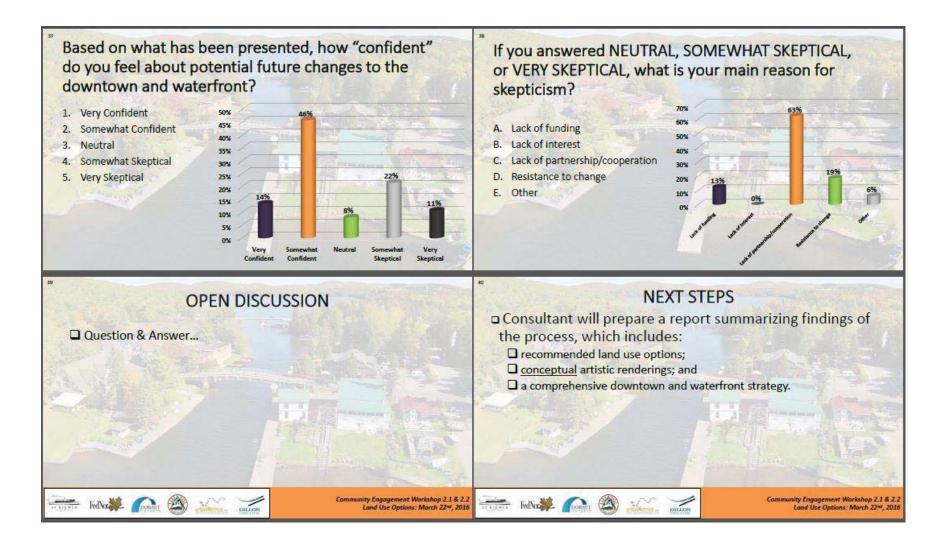












Appendix D – The Business Case: 'Transformational'

Building on the analysis and findings presented in this report, a business case has been prepared to help communicate the potential benefits associated with the 'Transformative' land use option. Simply put, the successful implementation of a refined land use concept for the downtown and waterfront is dependent on collaboration and the establishment of partnerships. And without a rational business case, partners (financial and otherwise) will not buy into potential enhancements to downtown and waterfront.

Background

- Orset is geographically split between the Township of Lake of Bays (District Municipality of Muskoka) and the Township of Algonquin Highlands (Haliburton County), with Main Street serving as the boundary between the two townships.
- There is a small population of approximately 500 permanent residents, however, it also functions as an important service centre to a large seasonal population of cottagers and other visitors to the area (e.g. Algonquin Park).
- During the peak Summer season, the local population in the Township of Lake of Bays is estimated at 18,000, in addition to more than 10,000 in the Township of Algonquin Highlands, including both permanent and seasonal residents¹⁵.
- Dorset already boasts a diverse assortment of tourism and commercial enterprises concentrated in the downtown and waterfront area, however, there are opportunities to supplement the existing inventory to further establish Dorset as the premier destination on Lake of Bays.
- One of the most appealing aspects of the hamlet is the lakefront setting and central focus around the Narrows, which creates a vibrant and engaging atmosphere for local residents and visitors alike.
- Going forward, Dorset's picturesque location, quaint and friendly character, scenic natural beauty and rich heritage will continue to support a local economy primarily supported by tourism, recreation and other service sector industries.

Mission Statement & Objectives

While there has been considerable progress completed to-date, a long-term, cohesive vision for the waterfront and downtown must now be established to leverage existing assets and enhance Dorset's future economic viability.

The primary objective of this revitalization initiative is to establish a viable land use concept that supports the outcomes listed in *Section* 1.2 of the accompanying report.

¹⁵ There are approximately 3,300 permanent residents and 14,700 seasonal residents in the Township of Lake of Bays. There are approximately 2,000 permanent residents and 10,000 seasonal residents in the Township of Algonquin Highlands.

Needs Assessment

- As emphasized throughout the body of the report, input and feedback from the local community has been fundamental to guide the development of a refined land use concept for the downtown and waterfront in Dorset.
- Our approach to community engagement has been described in detail in Section 2 of the accompanying report. The various community engagement exercises undertaken as part of the Dorset Waterfront Plan and Downtown Study include:
 - 1) Community Surveys launched publicly on February 4, 2016 and responses were collected for a period of one month, with a total of 772 responses submitted, of which 363 were fully completed 16.
 - 2) Information Booth at Snowball Winter Carnival hosted by urbanMetrics at the 26th annual Snowball Winter Carnival on Saturday, February 20, 2016.
 - 3) Key Stakeholder Interviews a series of 23 one-on-one interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from the local community between February and April 2016.
 - 4) Public Workshops a series of public workshops were hosted during March 2016 (i.e. March 1, 2016 at 2:00 pm and 6:00 pm; and March 22, 2016 at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm), which were attended by approximately 90 local stakeholders. For these workshops quantified engagement techniques were utilized to engage local residents and encourage public participation, in order to ensure that our findings and recommendations are representative of the interests of the entire community.





Technical Analysis

There are a number of strong connections between the objectives of this study and other strategic planning initiatives that have already been set in motion in Dorset, including:

- SS Bigwin Summary Business Plan 2014;
- Orset Community Partnership (DCP) Strategic Action Plan 2010 2015;
- First Impressions Community Exchange (FICE): Magnetawan's first impressions of Dorset 2014;
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit: Healthy Community Design Tool;
- Algonquin Highlands Municipal Cultural Plan; and
- Lake of Bays Community-Based Strategic Plan.

¹⁶ For the purposes of our analysis we have focused on only fully completed survey responses. Approximately 363 of the 772 surveys (i.e. 47%) were fully completed.

The refined land use concept presented in this Business Case is intended to reflect the goals and objectives of these existing strategies, as detailed in *Section 4.3* of the accompanying report. The key messages derived from surveys, stakeholder interviews and public workshops have been summarized below¹⁷:

- 1) Seasonality is a major challenge in Dorset.
- 2) Shopping and restaurants are the primary drawing features.
- 3) Cars and boats are the most common modes of transportation to travel to/from Dorset.
- 4) The improvements that would have the greatest impact on the waterfront and downtown area in Dorset include:
 - Shoreline preservation and environmental protection
 - Enhancing pedestrian connections
 - Improving docking availability and boating accessibility
 - Promoting tourism and/or commercial development
 - Developing arts and culture
- 5) The most significant obstacles impacting the future of Dorset, include:
 - Seasonality and low population potential solutions include: (1) adding more retail and services, and (2) adding more year round attractions are the best ways to address seasonality and low population
 - Quality and variety of shops and services potential solutions include: (1) increasing the variety of businesses, and (2) adding more services are the best ways to improve shops and services
 - Quality and variety of attractions potential solutions include: improving marketing and communication is the best way to improve attractions
- 6) The greatest investment priorities from the perspective of local residents and regular visitors are:
 - S/W Quadrant (Parcel D) includes public docks along the Narrows, the Marine Museum, former Clayton building and the marine railway used for maintenance on the SS Bigwin.
 - N/W Quadrant (Parcel C) includes Cedar Narrows Park, public docks along the Narrows, private property currently used for commercial purposes (i.e. Stares; Zachary's Restaurant; Johnson's; REMAX; former Northern D'Lites Ice Cream).
- 7) Consensus that the best course of action with respect to Parcel D is to repurpose the former Clayton property with major modifications.
- 8) There is strong demand for the redevelopment of the former Northern D'Lites ice cream store.
- 9) Adding new boat slips is crucial to enhancing tourism and economic development in Dorset.

¹⁷ A detailed summary of the results from online surveys and public workshops have been provided in Section 4.1, Appendix A, Appendix B and Appendix C.

- 10) Consensus that enhancing pedestrian connections will have the greatest impact at the water's edge and along Main Street.
- 11) Ensuring environmental sustainability is the top priority with respect to shoreline preservation along the waterfront in Dorset.
- Figure D-1 details the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats ('SWOT') of the downtown and waterfront area in Dorset according to input from local stakeholders, including surveys, stakeholder interviews and public workshops.

Figure D-1:SWOT Analysis

Strengths



- Beautiful natural lakefront setting
- · Authenticity and good existing balance (i.e. Dorset isn't overdeveloped)
- Diverse inventory of existing public assets (e.g. heritage; recreational; cultural)
- · Unique character and charm sets Dorset apart from other communities
- SS Bigwin is a major draw and has helped to raise the profile of the community
- The Dorset Lookout Tower is a key asset that continually attracts visitors
- Important retail hub on Lake of Bays that complements services and offerings of other nearby communities
- · Major concentration/critical mass of retailers and services directly accessible by boat
- Accounts for a significant portion of Algonquin Highlands' commercial tax base
- Strong community engagement and event attendance
- · DCP is an invaluable community champion (e.g. leadership; fundraising)
- · Already a thriving Summer (i.e. peak season) destination

eaknesses



- Seasonality peak season only lasts 6-8 weeks; shoulder seasons are very slow
- · Lack of docking capacity during peak season
- . Connectivity to the Narrows and awareness of public docks at the marina
- · Municipal parking requirements hinder opportunities for redevelopment
- Septic tank capacity issues constrain opportunities for redevelopment
- · Cooperation and collaboration between municipal governments
- No public washrooms and limited public parking located south of the Narrows
- Limited collaboration amongst local businesses (i.e. hours; events; docking/parking)
- · Limited new investment and commercial development during the past 15 years
- · Low community involvement amongst many cottagers
- Lack of compelling attractions for cottagers "more to do in Dorset 20 years ago"
- · People don't stay long enough (i.e. most visitors are in-and-out)
- No casual/fast/cheap food options (e.g. take-out; coffee shop; food truck)
- Recent emphasis on beautification rather than attracting more people to Dorset
- Too much reliance on volunteers and donors to make improvements in Dorset
- Breaks in pedestrian connectivity and minimal way-finding

continued on the following page...

pportunities



- · Adding permanent and/or floating docks to increase docking capacity
- Development of waterfront properties
- Fostering partnerships
- Adding new commercial uses (e.g. coffee shop and/or bakery; art gallery/studio)
- Adding roof to skating rink to allow multi-purpose use (i.e. similar to Magnetawan)
- Construction of SS Bigwin boathouse (for sun protection and year-round storage)
- Relocating marine railway away from the Narrows and former Clayton property
- Offering incentives and/or relaxation of zoning requirements (e.g. severance of former Clayton property for future sale)
- Adding parking and/or public washrooms on the south side of the Narrows
- Embracing the shoulder seasons and off-season (i.e. extending the peak season)
- Leveraging the surrounding natural environment (e.g. proximity to Algonquin Park)
- Introducing new activities and attractions for cottagers and other visitors
- Enhanced community spaces and activities
- · Promoting local culture and arts
- Increasing utilization of community park and pavilion (e.g. Farmers' Market; Local Artisans Fair; etc.)
- Improved pedestrian connectivity and way-finding system

hreats



- Seasonality makes it challenging to operate a sustainable year-round business
- Municipal parking and septic issues could jeopardize development opportunities
- Cooperation and coordination between municipalities
- Getting people to work together towards a "greater good" and a cohesive, unified vision (e.g. cooperation amongst business owners and buy-in from the entire community)
- Lack of focus on the big picture (i.e. improving Dorset is a win for all stakeholders)
- Replication of existing businesses or too much emphasis on commercial development
- Managing expectations no single improvement will be a game-changer for Dorset (i.e. the collective impact of a series of improvements will be transformative)
- Municipalities can't be expected to shoulder the entire financial burden
- · Revitalizing the former Clayton property is critical to success
- Focusing too much on cottagers, rather than attracting more visitors and outside investment (i.e. spending that is not already flowing to Dorset)
- Too many barriers to accessibility (e.g. docking; signage; accommodations)
- · Lack of high speed internet availability

Timelines, Roles and Responsibilities

- Fostering partnerships and collaboration between various stakeholders will be critical to the successful implementation of the recommended land use option.
- The realization of infrastructure/capital improvements in the downtown and waterfront area in Dorset will be dependent on securing funding from various levels of government (e.g. Federal; Provincial; Township of Lake of Bays; Township of Algonquin Highlands).
- Local residents and private sector partners will also be necessary to take on the financial responsibility for the potential development of waterfront properties (e.g. re-purposing/redeveloping of the former Clayton building; rebuilding Northern D'Lites Ice Cream shop), given the significant amount of private land ownership in the downtown and waterfront Study Area.
- Figure D-2 provides an overview of the roles and responsibilities of the various partners that we anticipate would be involved in making various enhancements to the downtown and waterfront in Dorset.
- It is important to emphasize that this is not intended place any burden (financial or otherwise) on the various partners that have been identified. This table is simply intended to illustrate where buy-in would be required from local and regional partners to successfully implement elements proposed as part of each land use concept.

Figure D-2: Summary of Roles & Responsibilities of Project Partners – 'Transformative'

ELEMENTS	ITEMS	Option 3 Transformative	PARTNERS				
			LocalGOVT	BIGWIN	DCPF	Sr. GOVT	PRIVATE
	Three Additional Daniel Colonia						
Programming	Three Additional Dorset Gateway Signs New Wayfinding Signage	<u> </u>	•		<u> </u>	•	
	Improved Car and Trailer Parking at Dorset Parkette	•	9		•		
	Enhance Picnic Area at Dorset Parkette	•	0		•		
	Benches + Street Furniture	•	9				
	Utility Post Banners	•	0			•	
	Remove SS Bigwin Rail	•		•			
	Focus on New Event Development	•	9		<u> </u>	•	•
	Improve Marketing/Event Planning	•	0	•	•	•	
	Bike Sharing Station	•	0				
	Public WIFI						9
	White Pine Tree Interplanting	•	0		•	•	
	Seating Amenities Along Boardwalk	•	0	•			
	Electric Vehicle Charging Station(s)	•	0	•	•	•	
	Electric verifice Charging Station(s)						
New Pedestriar	Join North side of Channel and Provide Boardwalk along Robinson's Boat Slips	<u> </u>	0		•		0
Connestions at	Join South side of Channel	•	•		9		9
Water's Edge	Join Boat Launch to LCBO with Extended Boardwalk	•	9		9		9
Downtown	Sidewalk Treatment - Main St at Recreation Centre	<u> </u>	0				
Pedestrian	Sidewalk Treatment - Main St from Robinson's to LCBO	<u> </u>	9				
Enhancement	Sidewalk Treatment - Trading Bay to Church/Post Office	<u> </u>	0				
	Path - Harvey Ave to Hwy 35	<u> </u>	9				
	Path - Playground to Narrows (behind Colebridge Park)		0				
	Path - Health Hub	<u> </u>	9				
	Sidewalk Treatment - Connecting to Pizza on Earth	<u> </u>	9				
	Crosswalk Markings	•	•		<u> </u>		
Docks/Parking	Repair and Extend Bigwin Pier Dock and Relocate SS Bigwin	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	•	•	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Add New Public Dock Facility (Dorset Parkette)	9	9				
	Support New Dock Space (Robinson's)		9		•		
	Support New Dock Space (Trading Bay)		9				
	Support New Dock Space (Johnson's)	•	9		•		
	Canoe/Kayak Launch	•	9				
	Add Public Parking south of the Narrows (Trading Bay Dining Co.)	•	0		0		<u></u>
Structures	Former Clayton Building Repurpose			<u> </u>			
	Former Clayton Building Replace	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>		<u> </u>
	SS Bigwin Boat Shelter	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Redevelopment of Parcel C (Johnson's)	<u> </u>	•		<u> </u>		9
	Public Washrooms (South of Bridge)	<u> </u>	•	<u> </u>	<u> </u>		9
	Covered Rink, Concrete Surface and Tree Shade				<u></u>	<u>-</u>	

SOURCE: urbanMetrics inc.

Potential Land Use Concept & Costing

- The overall concept shown in Figure D-3 builds on the existing charm and community investments, while also (1) improving the pedestrian connectivity between public assets and private establishments, (2) providing additional parking and docking, and (3) identifying initiatives that make Dorset even more enjoyable and attractive to both tourists, and permanent and seasonal residents.
- The overall land use concept presents a phased set of improvements that reflect modest, transitional and transformative approaches to enhancing the downtown and waterfront area
- This business case has focused on the transformative approach, which is shown in yellow in Figure D-3.
- The transformative approach incorporates modest and transitional improvements (shown in red and orange), but also includes the following elements:
 - 1) A pedestrian circuit path is enhanced with context-sensitive way-finding features between key public assets: a formalized natural path between the Dorset Pavilion and eastern trail to the Dorset Lookout Tower, and between the Dorset Pavilion and Dorset Parkette.
 - 2) Improved parking and picnicking facilities at the Dorset Parkette, including an underpass connection under Highway 35, between the boat launch and the downtown shops.
 - 3) A more prominent potential pedestrian connection and way-finding between the Johnson's establishment and Colebridge Park, as well in front of the Dorset Recreation Centre.
 - 4) A designated path with way-finding signs between Dorset Parkette and the bridge on Highway 35 becomes a welcoming gateway from the Little Trading Bay points of access; it provides additional routes to the downtown via Harvey Avenue and a potential mid-crossing to the open space featuring the skating rink, baseball diamond and Colebridge Park.
 - 5) A more formal sidewalk and small gateway at the northeast corner of the Main Street and Harvey Avenue intersection, strengthening a safer and more pleasant pedestrian movement to the Post Office, while also being an iconic landmark entering the downtown from the south end.
 - 6) Designated paths and way-finding measures along Highway 35 and Bonfield Street, garnering exposure and economic benefits to other local establishments and artisans in Dorset.
 - 7) Additional docking at the Dorset Narrow Park, and along the new boardwalk situated south of the waterfront, adjacent to the Marine Museum and former Clayton building.
 - 8) An extended all-season covered structure at the Marine Museum is envisioned for the SS Bigwin.
 - 9) The former Clayton building is rebuilt with a new footprint, and additional docking is available at Trading Bay, Johnson's water edge and the Dorset Parkette.
 - **10)** An additional underpass connection on the south side of the Narrows, as well as enhanced way-finding and path along Main Street in the Downtown.
 - 11) Investments are also made to upgrade the existing skating rink with a paved surface into a paved surface with and a shade canopy for all-season use.
 - **12)** Electrical vehicle charging station is made available in Dorset and additional vehicular parking is also potentially made available south of the Main Street bridge.
- Figure D-4 provides a conceptual land use plan for the properties in the vicinity of the Narrows and Figure D-5 provides an artistic rendering that reflects the 'Transformative' land use concept. A descriptive vision of the downtown and waterfront in Dorset based on the transformative land use concept has been provided in *Section 5.4* of the accompanying report.



Figure D-3: Overall Land Use Concept



SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited.



Figure D-4: 'Transformative' Land Use Concept



SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited.



Conclusions

- As described in the accompanying report, a transformative land use concept has been developed to reinvigorate the downtown and waterfront area in Dorset, in order to promote tourism, economic development and job creation in Dorset.
- This conceptual land use plan has been developed based on the insights and perspectives of the local community.
- It is important to emphasize that this concept has been prepared for illustrative purposes only, and is simply intended to help ensure that a collaborative approach is taken with respect to future investments in Dorset's downtown and waterfront.
- This potential land use concept has been developed to facilitate a coordinated/strategic approach to making enhancements to the downtown and waterfront area in order to support the following key objectives:
 - Enhancing pedestrian connections and walkability between public assets and attractions;
 - 2) Promoting tourism, economic development and job creation;

Figure D-5: 'Transformative' Artistic Rendering



SOURCE: Dillon Consulting Limited.

- 3) Maintaining and/or improving shoreline preservation;
- 4) Improving public access and visitation from cottagers and tourists;
- 5) Ensuring that public and private assets are well-positioned to support enduring community-based partnerships; and,
- 6) Ensuring the plan is financially sustainable for stakeholders, including taxpayers.
- The Dorset Waterfront Plan and Downtown Study have helped to encourage community dialogue and establish a foundation in terms of how to improve the local community in future years.

- The high-level cost estimated for the transformative land use concept is in the order of **\$4.7 million**, however, it is important to recognize that there are a number of additional studies that should be undertaken to make various enhancements a reality including:
 - 1) Shoreline engineering, costing and geotechnical studies;
 - 2) Environmental impact assessment studies for new docks, underpass connections, SS Bigwin structure and redevelopment of the former Clayton property;
 - 3) Pro Forma Analysis former Clayton building redevelopment;
 - 4) Waste water management/sanitary disposal studies;
 - 5) Suggested/required feasibility and engineering studies (e.g. former Clayton building);
 - 6) Confirmation of incremental changes in legal and insurance liability; and
 - 7) Parking feasibility and/or location studies.