

Town of Bishop's Falls

Environmental Assessment

Exploits River Development Strategy
Phase 1

July 4, 2016

Submitted to

Minister of Environment and Conservation
PO Box 8700
St. John's, NL A1B 4J6
Attention: Director of Environmental Assessment

1.0 **Name of undertaking**

Exploits River Development Strategy – Phase 1.

2.0 **Proponent**

Name and address of corporate body

Name of Corporate Body	Town of Bishop's Falls
Address	445 Main Street (PO Box 310), Bishop's Falls, NL, A0H 1C0

Chief executive officer

Name	Randy Drover
Official Title	Town Manager/Clerk
Address	445 Main Street (PO Box 310), Bishop's Falls, NL, A0H 1C0
Telephone Number	709 258 6581
Email	randydrover@bishopsfalls.ca

Principle contact person for purposes of environmental assessment

Name	Randy Drover
Official Title	Town Manager/Clerk
Address	445 Main Street (PO Box 310), Bishop's Falls, NL, A0H 1C0
Telephone Number	709 258 6581
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3.0 **The undertaking**

3.1 *Name of the undertaking*

Exploits River Development Strategy – Phase 1.

3.2 *Purpose/Rational/Need for the undertaking*

The Exploits River is one of the best and most recognized recreational salmon rivers in Atlantic Canada. It represents a significant commercial and non-commercial economic development opportunity in the tourism sector for the Town of Bishop's Falls. The *Exploits River Development Strategy*¹, which was adopted by Council in July 2015, outlines a framework that will enhance the opportunities around the river from a fishing and recreation perspective.

Bishop's Falls has traditionally relied extensively on the railway and manufacturing sectors. Tourism has not been explored in any substantial way in the community; however, this is goal one (1) of the Town's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan (ICSP). The Exploits River and the exceptional salmon fishery are viewed as the Town's quintessential tourism assets. They are presently undeveloped and underutilized for this purpose. This project will diversify the community's economy by creating and enhancing tourism opportunities around the Exploits River and the recreational salmon fishery. An increase in the number of non-resident anglers will increase demand for local products and services such as, but not limited to, food/beverages, guiding services, accommodations, fuel, etc. It is hoped that additional revenue in the private and

¹ http://bishopsfalls.ca/Bishops_Falls/Home_files/Exploits%20River%20Dev.%20Strategy%20Final%20Report.pdf

public sectors will lead to business growth and job creation. Phase 1 of the *Exploits River Development Strategy* focuses on developing or enhancing access to the Exploits River for this purpose.

4.0 Description of the undertaking

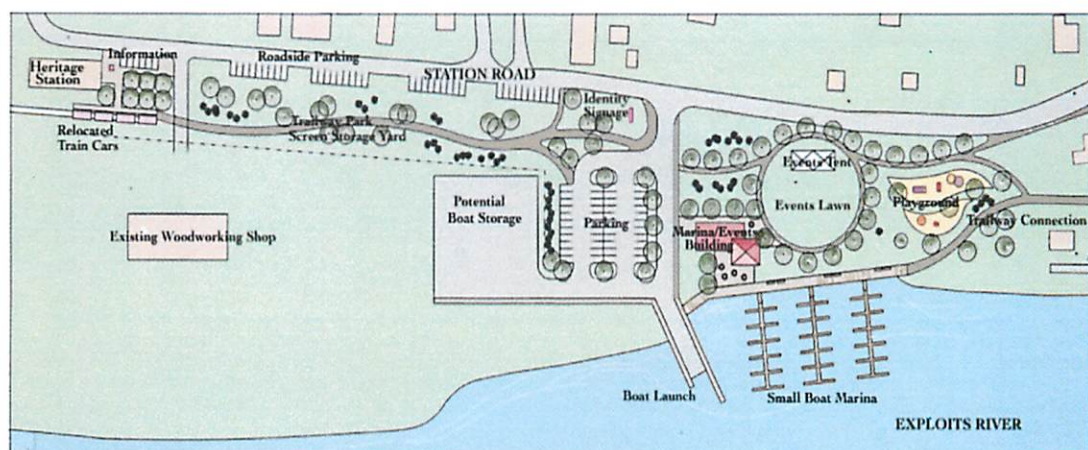
4.1 *Geographic locations*

Four locations along the Exploits River will be enhanced or developed as part of phase 1 of the *Exploits River Development Strategy*. They are as follows (note: all the sites were selected because they are either currently used for similar activities or offer the best location for the enhancement/development).

(1) Station Road, Bishop's Falls.

A slipway will be developed at this location to enable boaters to access the upper section (above the dam) of the Exploits River. A paved parking lot will also be constructed.

At this point in the process the detailed designs are not available. They will be prepared by a consultant if the Town receives funding from the provincial and federal governments for phase 1. Below you will find a concept drawing (please note only the slipway and parking lot are being developed in the first phase). Also below are Google Earth images of the area.



Heritage Centre
Museum and Riverfront Park

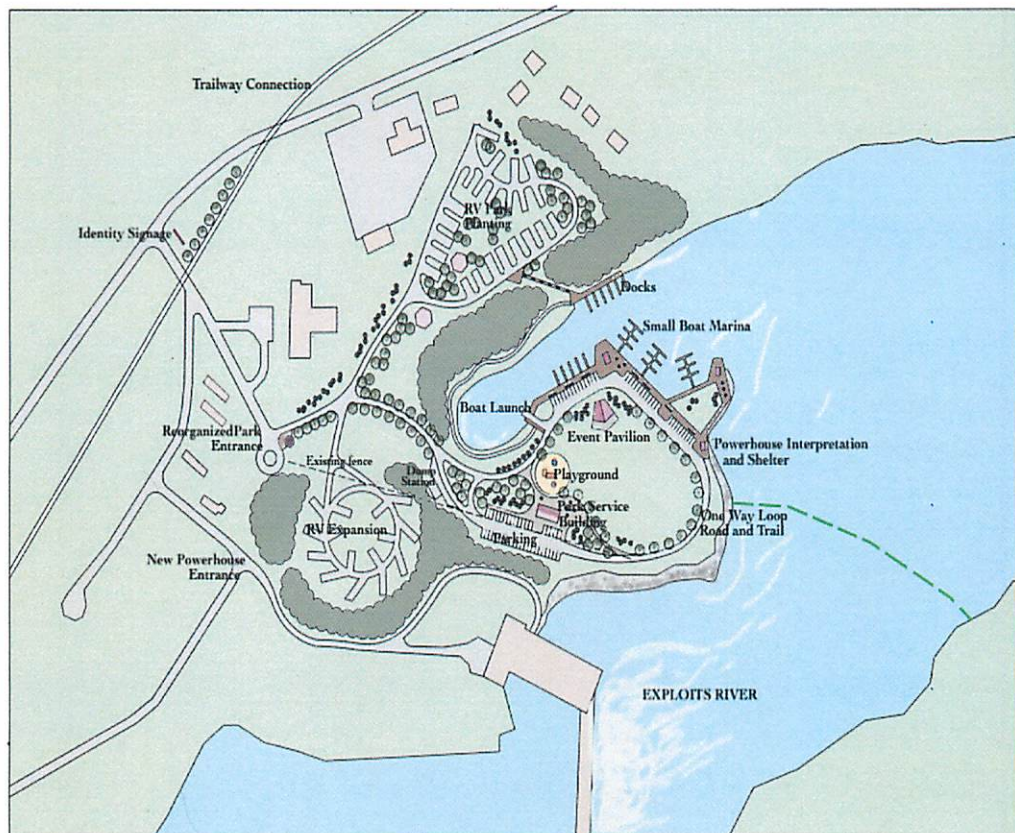




(2) Fallsview Municipal Park, Bishop's Falls.

A boat launch will be developed at this location (in the cove) to enable boaters to access the lower section (below the dam) of the Exploits River. Individuals are currently launching boats from the lower section of the Fallsview Park.

At this point in the process the detailed designs are not available. They will be prepared by a consultant if the Town receives funding from the provincial and federal governments for phase 1. Below you will find a concept drawing (please note only the boat launch is being developed in the first phase). Also below are Google Earth images of the area.



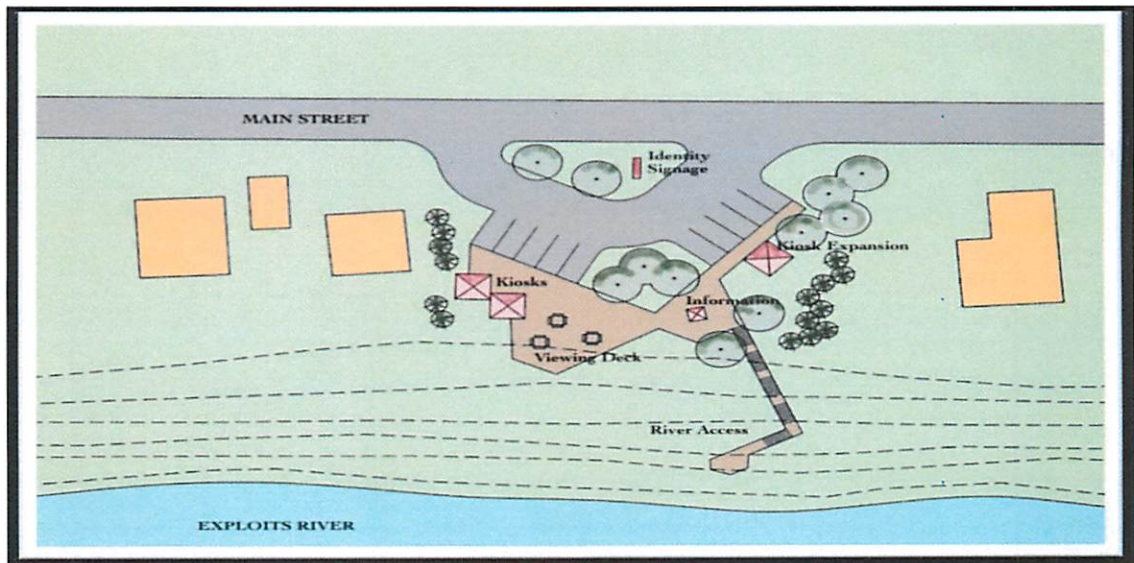


(3) Main Street, Bishop's Falls.

To make the river more accessible, particularly for salmon anglers, a stairway is proposed for this location along with a lookout. In this way anglers get safe access to the river and some of the premiere fishing pools, and visitors have the opportunity to get close to the river. Formalized parking, integrated seating and picnic areas will provide dramatic views of the river and enhance the opportunity to socialize. The on-site kiosks can offer a variety of items from local crafts, to in-season salmon tackle and access to river guides. The concept also offers the potential to design a storyboard documenting and mapping salmon pools in the area, including their name and history. This will be especially attractive for many visitors to the river who are not as familiar with the history and locations of the salmon pools.

This area is currently used by anglers to access the river. It is also a common area for people to gather to watch the anglers and view the river.

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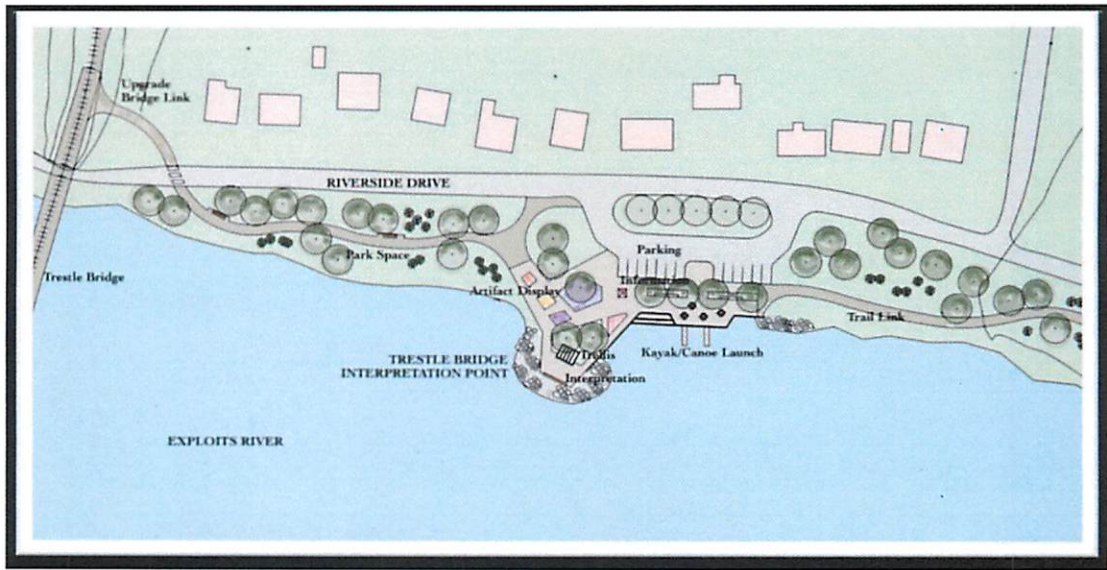


(4) Riverside Drive, Bishop's Falls.

Proposed on site amenities include an upgraded pedestrian link to the trestle that enables visitors to walk to and explore the trestle. A water recreation focus will also be placed on canoeing and kayaking at the site to attract anglers and tourists, and to expose them to the pleasures of this activity. The Trestle Bridge Interpretation Park also features artifacts related to the construction of the trestle, its unique attributes and the railway history. This site encourages sitting, viewing and strolling along river's edge to enjoy this resource and to ponder a previous era.

A section of this area is currently being used by residents and visitors to launch boats; however, this activity will be redirected to Station Road where there is more room for vehicular traffic. Additionally, the area includes an existing trail.

At this point in the process the detailed designs are not available. They will be prepared by a consultant if the Town receives funding from the provincial and federal governments for phase 1. Below you will find a concept drawing. Also below are Google Earth images of the area.





4.2 *Physical features*

The projects do not include any major physical features. As the concept drawings above reveal, these projects primarily include enhancements (i.e. parking lots, boat slipways/launches, walkways, and viewing decks) to locations along the river to improve access. In all cases save Station Road, these areas are currently being used to access the river for boating and fishing purposes.

Including all proposed sites, the Town estimates the project will affect an area totaling 85,941 square feet (Main Street 9900, Station Road 30,625, and Riverside Drive 45,416). This number, however, is subject to the detailed design stage and will likely vary.

The four areas noted herein are located within the municipal boundaries of Bishop's Falls in developed residential or commercial areas. They are all primarily flat sites and are cleared of vegetation save for grass, flowers, and a scattering of trees. All sites are located along the Exploits River.

4.3 *Construction*

Construction is estimated to begin in the spring of 2017 (late May or early June) and will likely conclude by the fall. Potential sources of pollutants during the construction period include silt, dust, and other things typical of similar construction projects. The project budget includes an allocation for environmental protection. The latter includes the following:

- Silt fencing
- Sand bagging
- Dust control
- Hoarding of existing vegetation
- Waste management
- Terrain disturbance management

4.4 *Operation*

The sites will be maintained and operated by the Town of Bishop's Falls. No pollutants are anticipated during the operation period except for general waste resulting from public use. Waste collection receptacles will be installed on the sites and regularly checked by municipal personnel.

4.5 *Occupations*

This project will result in approximately 5 direct jobs (construction trades helpers and labourers 7611 and/or heavy equipment operators 7521) during construction. No new jobs will be created during the operating period because the existing human resources of the Town of Bishop's Falls will be utilized. This project will be completed by a contractor who will be engaged through the public tender process. The latter will not be issued until the Town receives confirmation of funding from the provincial and federal governments.

5.0 **Approval of the undertaking**

The Town anticipates having to receive approval from the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans to construct the slipway on Station Road and the boat launch in the Fallsview Park. This process will be initiated once the Town receives confirmation of funding from the provincial and federal governments.

6.0 **Schedule**

Construction for this project is anticipated to begin late May or early June in 2017. It will likely conclude in October 2017 if all goes accordingly. The commencement dates were selected to allow time for the following mile stones: Engage a prime consultant, complete the detailed designs, issue tender, review tender submissions and award contract.

7.0 **Funding**

This project is contingent on funding from the provincial (Department of Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development) and federal (ACOA) governments. The breakdown between the funding partners, as per the Town's initial application, is as follows (Note: The Town anticipates the final budget for this project will be lower than the amount initially sought):

Province (1/3)	\$ 513,576
Town (1/3)	513,576
ACOA (1/3)	<u>513,576</u>
	<u>\$1,540,728</u>



Signature of Chief Executive Officer

July 4/16
Date