



**Town of Grand Falls-Windsor**  
**Environmental Assessment Registration**  
**Riverfront – Zip Line and Trails**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Name of the Undertaking</i> _____	1
<i>Proponent</i> _____	1
<i>The Undertaking</i> _____	1
<i>Description of the Understaking</i> _____	1
<b>Geographical Location</b> _____	1
<b>Physical Features</b> _____	2
<b>Construction</b> _____	3
<b>Operation</b> _____	4
<b>Occupations</b> _____	4
<b>Project Related Document</b> _____	4
<i>Approval of the Understaking</i> _____	5
<i>Schedule</i> _____	5
<i>Funding</i> _____	5
<i>Drawing SP-1</i> _____	6
<i>Appendix A</i> _____	8
<i>Appendix B</i> _____	10

## Environmental Assessment Registration

**Name of the undertaking:** Riverfront Development – Zip line and Trails

**Proponent:** Town of Grand Falls-Windsor

- (i) Name of Corporate Body: Town of Grand Falls-Windsor
- (ii) Address: Grand Falls-Windsor, NL
- (iii) Chief Executive Officer: Nelson Chatman, P. Eng  
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- (iv) Principal contact person for purpose of Environmental Assessment:  
  
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Telephone No: 709-489-0427  
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### **The Undertaking:**

- (i) Riverfront Development – Zip line, Trails and Suspension Bridge
- (ii) This area is required to develop walking trails and provide access to future zip line towers as part of the overall Riverfront Development of the Exploits River. The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor is working to promote the river as a tourist destination and protect it from other potential developments that would be detrimental to this venture. These trails will link to a whole network of trails within the Town, including to a proposed suspension bridge over the river. The overall goal is to bring life back to the downtown area by using the Exploits River and all it has to offer. For years this area was unavailable due to the paper mill that shaped Grand Falls-Windsor. Now in its absence it is important the Town protects and enhances the area around the river.

### **Description of the Undertaking:**

- (i) **Geographical Location** - The proposed site is on the Southside of the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor, directly across the Exploits River. The zip line development will start near the proposed park and zip back and forth the Exploits River. Four (4) runs will be developed under Phase 1 while four (4) more runs will be developed under Phase 2. Access to the start of the development will be an existing municipal access as noted on **Drawing SP-01**. As part of the Riverfront Development Proposal, this area is required to enhance the Tourism Industry in Grand Falls-Windsor and help make it an attractive site for visitors. The Town requires that they

have control of this area to prevent other developments that may be detrimental to the river and affect the tourism potential. **See appendix A for an aerial view of the land requested.**

(ii) **Physical Features**

**Trails & Suspension Bridge Development** - The site will be used to provide a series of trails (as part of the Town's trail network). These trails will link the expansion of Gorge Park with the rest of the Corduroy Brook Trails including the Ski Chalet, Riverfront at Gorge Park, and the Sanger Memorial RV Park. Future trails are planned to Goodyears Dam. The trails will include granular resurfacing, foot bridge upgrading, stair upgrading, small trail lookouts and 4.0m wide walking/biking trails. They will be opened to pedestrians or cyclists only. There will be posts/gates installed to prevent ATV access to the walking trails. The trails will only be accessible by ATV for emergencies and maintenance work.

Also, the trails will link into the access to the Salmonid Interpretation Centre on the Exploits River. The total size of the land requested is 550,944m<sup>2</sup> (55ha). However, actual area of trails is approximately 18,124 m<sup>2</sup> (1.81ha) with zip line towers (12) taking up 2700 m<sup>2</sup> (0.27ha).

A suspension bridge will span the Exploits River Gorge with a boardwalk entrance/lookout area, site furniture, signage and interpretation, landscaping and site access. The bridge will consist of two separate 1.0m +/- wide suspension structures, each approximately 150m long, resulting in an overall bridge length in the order of 300m. The first structure is intended to span from the north side of the Exploits River to the island in the river, while the second structure is intended to span from the same island to the south side of the Exploits River. The north structure could potentially be divided into multiple spans (depending on the site geometry), as land on the north side of the river appears to encroach towards the island. The south structure is likely to be a single span structure. The bridge will consist of steel (galvanized or stainless) wire ropes for main cables, with either a steel or aluminum grid deck. A timber decking system will also be considered during the preliminary design phase. Depending on geometry and site constraints, the main cables could be located at deck level, or could be located above the deck forming the top of the handrails. In the latter option, the deck would be suspended below the main cables with steel wire rope hangers. The handrails will also consist of steel wire rope, with steel mesh barriers on each side of the decking for user comfort/safety. The steel wire rope main cables are likely to be anchored into bedrock with drilled and grouted rock anchors. It is difficult at this time to provide any further details until a full engineering study and design are completed.

**Zip Line Development** - There will be a series of eight (8) galvanized steel cables across the waters of the Exploits River complete with takeoff and landing platforms, cable termination structures and walkway trails. The corrosion resistant wire rope will be designed to a factor safety of three (3) with a maximum of two (2) individuals on the cable at one time. The normal operation allows for only one (1) individual at a time to use the zip line between termination points. Having the cable capable of supporting two (2) individuals with a factor safety of three (3) will allow the guide to access an individual that may have incurred a problems between both

termination points. Each run will be equipped with a second safety cable as part of the final design.

This development will require twelve (12) termination structures. Eight (8) structures will support one (1) only while four (4) structures will support two (2) runs. The structure will be corrosion resistant construction with painted steel and pressure treated timber. The support towers will be anchored to the existing bed rock (where possible) or to buried concrete anchors. External appearance will complement other structures within the park/trail areas.

This development will require four (4) takeoff platforms, four (4) landing platforms and four (4) combination takeoff and landing platforms. All platforms will be constructed on site utilizing pressure treated timber and placed just in front of the cable termination structures. Again, it is difficult to provide final details until a full engineering study and final design is completed.

There will be a series of walking trails linking the individual takeoff and landing platforms on the south side of the river and on the town side of that river where they will tie into the existing access trails and municipal roads.

There should be minimal if any negative environment effects on the surrounding area. Utilizing the existing access to the start of the zip line will ensure a smooth flow of traffic to and from the start of the zip line operation. Wherever possible, exposed rock will be utilized to anchor the zip line cable termination structures and the takeoff and landing platforms. Required excavation will be by hand only due to the remoteness of the proposed termination points. Where concrete anchors are required, ready mix concrete could be flown in by helicopter. The clearing of trees will be required only for the walking trails and the takeoff and landing platforms locations.

Attached in appendix B is a conceptual drawing of the proposed location for the trail network and location for the zip line towers. There will not be any additional development outside the trail network as the intent is to maintain the vegetation in the area. Except for the hiking & biking trails, there will be forested buffer between the proposed development and all other users.

- (iii) **Construction** - The approximate total construction period will be 2019-2021. The proposed date of first physical construction related activity on site would be September 2019. Construction will be limited to clearing area for the trails and an area for the proposed towers of the zip line. Due to the remoteness of the location, not much construction equipment will be utilized. Clearing and construction of the trails will be limited to chainsaw/brush saw. Where drilling of rock is required for placement of anchor dowels, a small portable drill will be used. The only sources of pollutants during the construction phase will be silt and sediment, dust, construction debris, sewage, risk of fuel, lubricant and hydraulic fuel release, airborne emissions, and noise pollution.

The construction methodology for the suspension bridge will be highly dependent on the site conditions and the findings of the preliminary design/investigation phase. The bridge design

would heavily consider construction methods, as the overall bridge construction costs will be vastly based on the factors related to construction. Access roads for the anchorages on the north and south sides of the river will likely be required, while careful planning will be essential when developing anchorage details on the island. Consideration will be given to develop a partial length approach ramp from the north side of the river to get equipment onto the island. Once the anchorages are installed, one could then hang the main cables and hand rails in their final positions and advance the deck from one end to the other (i.e. construction of the deck and barriers completed in leap frog fashion).

- (iv) **Operation** – The trails and suspension bridge will be opened all year round. The zip line would operate seasonally (May–October) with access for maintenance, emergencies, etc. This development will be restricted to the daily guided tours and daily inspections and maintenance. The potential sources of pollutants during the operation would be sewage and solid waste. The sewage facilitated will be provided near the base area only, utilizing the proposed facilities. There will be provisions for the deposit of solid waste at a number of platform locations and the waste which is expected to be minimal, will be collected on a daily basis by the operation’s guides before they leave the site each day. There will be no runoffs or leaching through the ground or deleterious materials entering water bodies. There will also be no hunting or trapping within the boundaries of this development.
- (v) **Occupations** - The trails would need a small crew to cut lines/upgrade trails. These jobs would be posted on our social media outlets and in the local newspaper. These types of projects have been completed under Town’s supervision in previous years. It is also possible to partner with the Corduroy Brook Enhancement Association who maintains the Corduroy Brook Trails annually. Work for the zip line towers will be coordinated with Chad Porter who is the private enterprise to operate the attraction. This will be a seasonal operation for tours, walking, trails and zip lining. During construction of the zip line, it is expected to employ thirteen (13) people who would include a Senior Manager, Construction Manager, Financial Auditor/Accountant, Engineers, Carpenters and other trade helpers. The operation of the zip line is expected to employ three (3) people who would include Tour and Travel Guides and a Sales Agent.
- (vi) **Project Related Documents** – Attached are Tract Consultant Ltd.’s proposal. This document is a concept in consultation with Town officials and the Town Council. The Riverfront can finally be promoted to attract tourists to the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor that was previously inaccessible due to mill operations. The Town wishes to revitalize the downtown area which includes enhancement of the rivers beauty and accessibility.

**Approval of the Undertaking:**

<b>APPROVAL REQUIRED</b>	<b>APPROVAL AUTHORITY</b>
License to Occupy and Land Easements	Crown Lands
Cutting Permit	Dept. of Natural Resources
Certification of Guide/Operator	Department of Training (Certificate Section)
Facility Inspection/Permit to Operate	Government Services Centre
Public Safety	Government Services Centre

**Schedule:**

It is anticipated construction could start as early as September 2019. If all permits/funds are in place, the Town would like to construct trails ASAP. With the potential zip line construction and some downtown developments, trail access is important for tourism and the community.

The cutting/trail construction could be delayed to October 2019 to ensure adequate staff and avoid any delays in cutting due to fire bans from the Dept. of Fisheries and Land Resources. Also, maintenance of existing trails by CBEA occurs in summer months and fall construction would provide opportunity for their assistance.

**Funding:**

The overall Riverfront Development Plan is contingent on assistance from the Federal and Provincial Governments (see information below). Both ACOA and TCII have been updated on the potential project and how it will enhance tourism in the region. Both Federal and Provincial Agencies are in favour of the development. Also, the zip line development is proposed by a private enterprise (Chad Porter) and is also dependent on funds from Federal and Provincial Agencies as noted above.

The preliminary estimate for the completion of trails, zip line, and suspension bridge is approximately \$3M. Information on the full Riverfront Development Plan can be found in **appendix B**.

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TCII  
Brian Baker  
3 Cromer Avenue  
2<sup>nd</sup> Provincial Building  
Grand Falls-Windsor, NL  
A2A 1W9  
709-292-4451

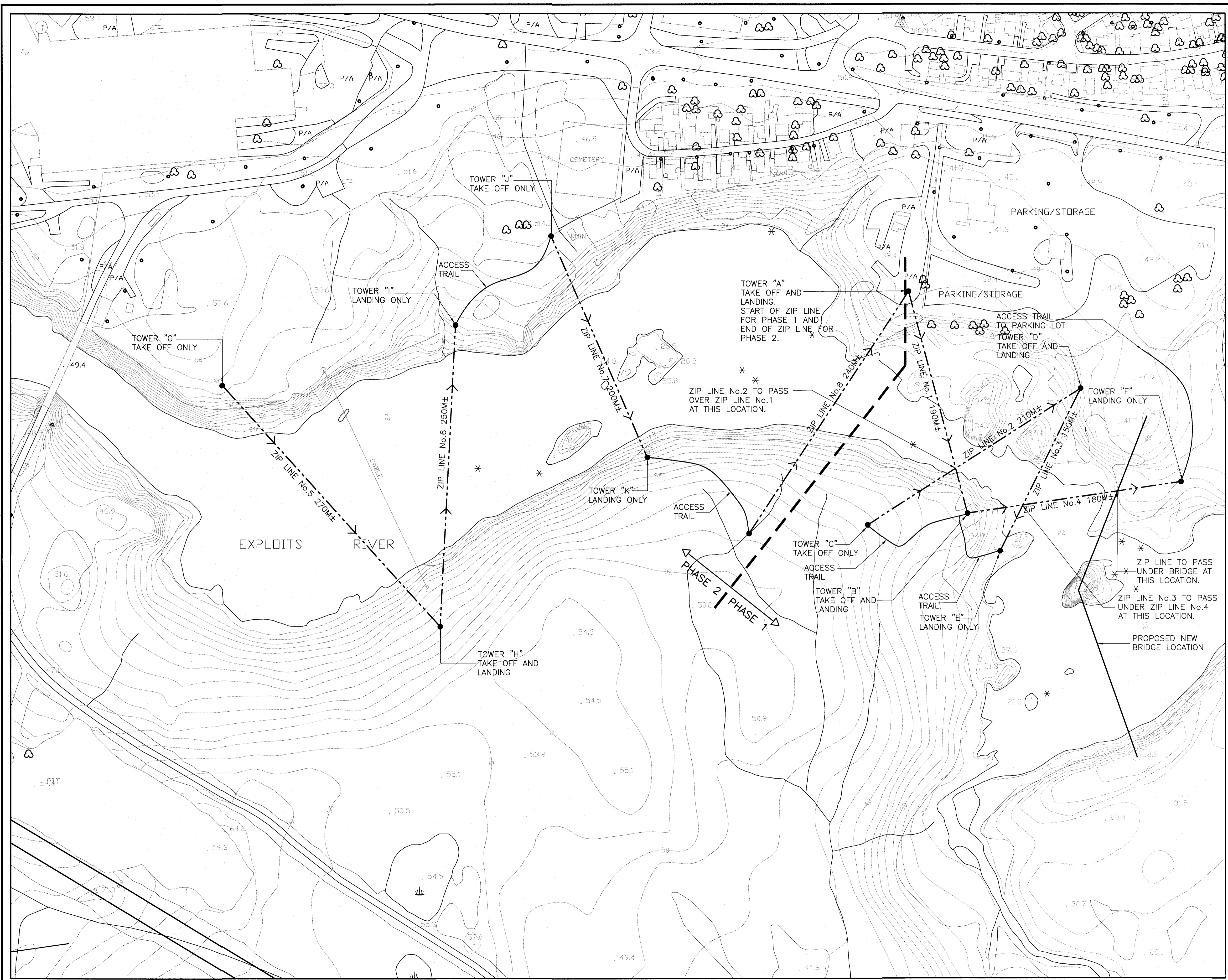
July 24, 2019

**Date**



**Signature of Chief Executive Officer**

171429



**SITE PLAN**  
SCALE: 1:1500

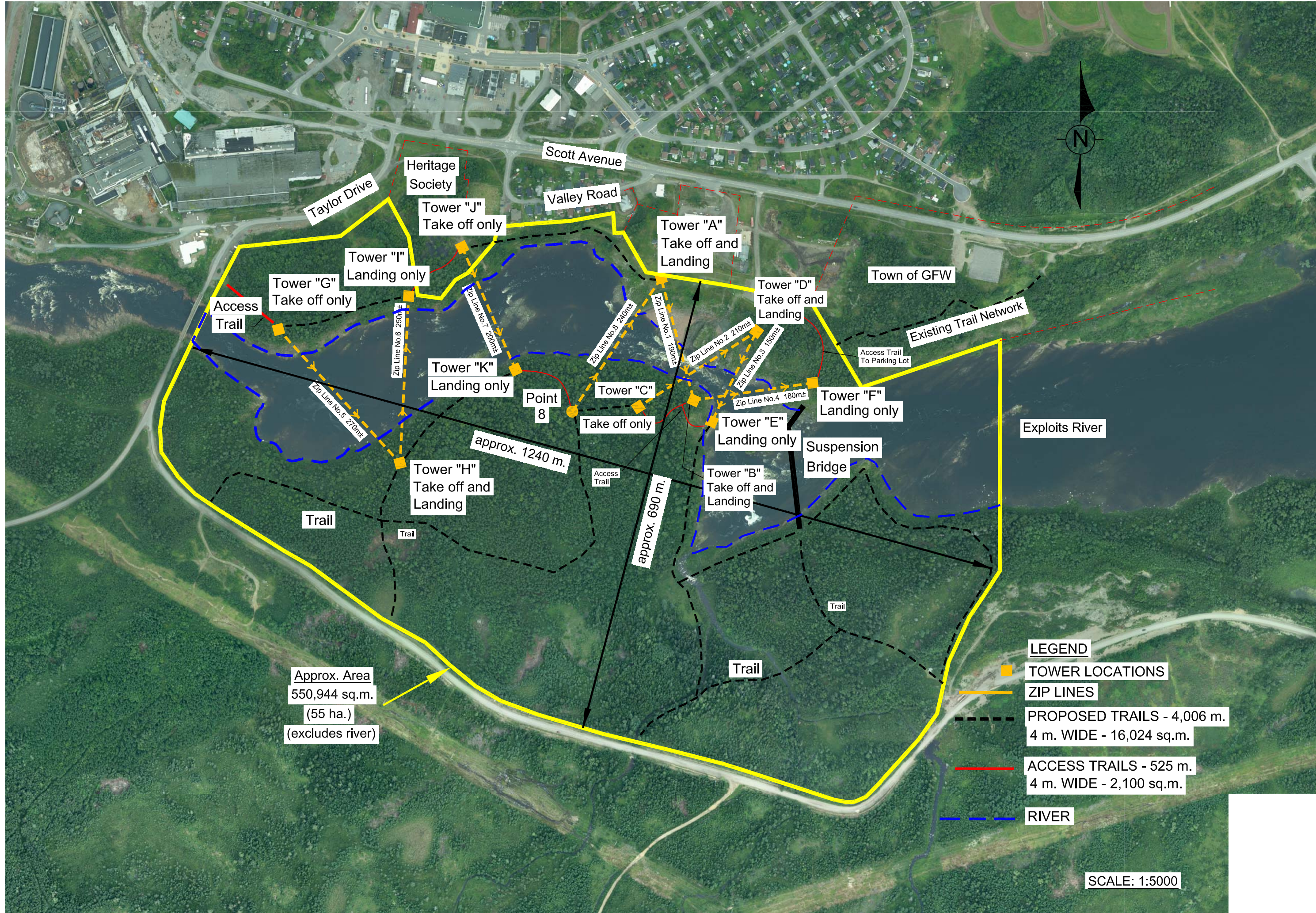
"THESE DESIGN DOCUMENTS ARE THE PROPERTY OF ANDERSON ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS LTD. THESE DRAWINGS CANNOT BE USED WITHOUT WRITTEN CONSENT OF ANDERSON ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS LTD."

permit: PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND PERMIT HOLDER This Permit Allows ANDERSON ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS LTD. To practice Professional Engineering in Newfoundland and Labrador. Permit No. as issued by APEQN 20292 which is valid for the year 2018.										
stamp: 	designed by: W.J. ANDERSON checked by: W.J. ANDERSON approved by: W.J. ANDERSON date: 07/11/18									
NOTES: 1. ALL LINES AND TOWERS ARE APPROXIMATE ONLY FOR CONCEPT DESIGN.										
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NO.	REVISION	DATE								
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anderson engineering consultants ltd. civil, structural, municipal engineers and project managers 3 UNION STREET, SUITE 103, CORNER BROOK NEWFOUNDLAND, CANADA, A2H-5M7 TEL: (709) 634-9944, FAX: (709) 634-9945										
CLIENT: CHAD PORTER 381 GRENFELL HEIGHTS GRANDFALLS-WINDSOR A2A AJA										
PROJECT: GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR ZIP LINE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT DESIGN										
DRAWING TITLE: SITE PLAN PHASE 1 AND 2 EXPLOITS RIVER CROSSING LOCATION (PRELIMINARY)										
DRAWN BY: J.R.R.	DATE: 07/11/18									
DEVELOPED BY: W.J. ANDERSON	SCALE: AS SHOWN									
PROJECT NO: <b>171429</b>										
DRAWING NO: <b>SP-01</b>	REV NO: 00									





# Appendix A



Approx. Area  
550,944 sq.m.  
(55 ha.)  
(excludes river)

- LEGEND**
- TOWER LOCATIONS
  - ZIP LINES
  - - - PROPOSED TRAILS - 4,006 m.  
4 m. WIDE - 16,024 sq.m.
  - ACCESS TRAILS - 525 m.  
4 m. WIDE - 2,100 sq.m.
  - - - RIVER

SCALE: 1:5000

Heritage Society

Scott Avenue

Valley Road

Taylor Drive

Tower "J" Take off only

Tower "I" Landing only

Tower "G" Take off only

Access Trail

Zip Line No. 6 250m±

Zip Line No. 7 200m±

Zip Line No. 8 240m±

Zip Line No. 1 100m±

Tower "A" Take off and Landing

Town of GFW

Tower "D" Take off and Landing

Existing Trail Network

Access Trail To Parking Lot

Zip Line No. 5 270m±

Tower "K" Landing only

Point 8

Zip Line No. 2 210m±

Zip Line No. 3 150m±

Tower "C" Take off only

Zip Line No. 4 180m±

Tower "F" Landing only

Exploits River

approx. 1240 m.

Access Trail

Tower "H" Take off and Landing

approx. 690 m.

Tower "E" Landing only

Suspension Bridge

Tower "B" Take off and Landing

Trail

Trail

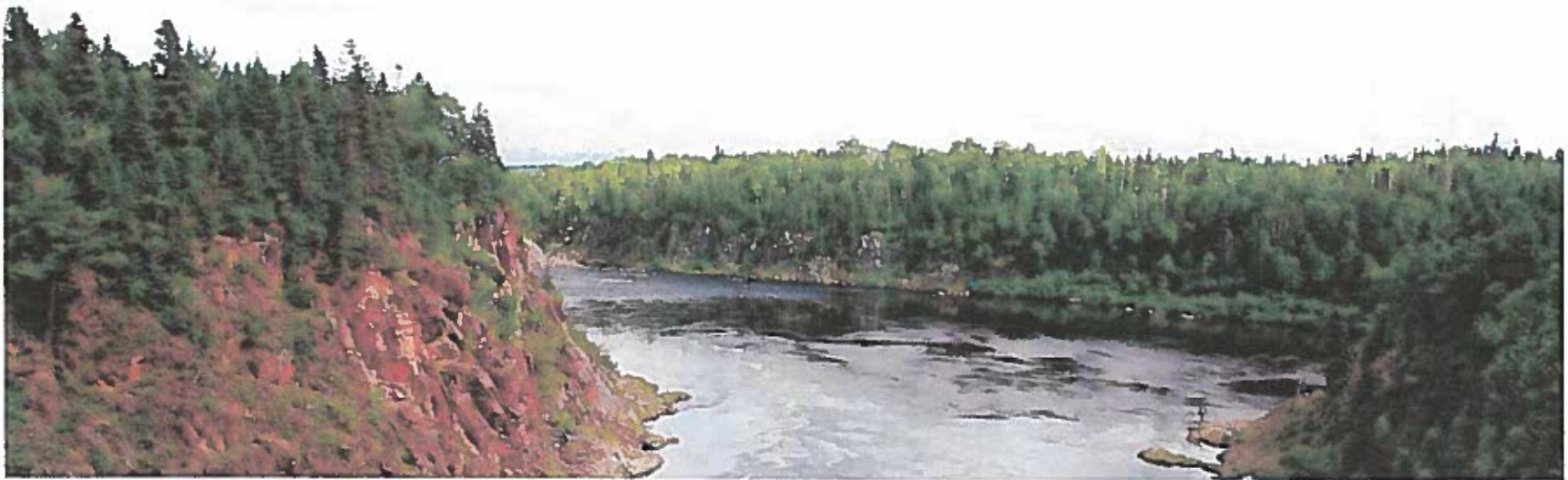
Trail

Trail

# Appendix B



# RIVERFRONT AND DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN GRAND FALLS-WINDSOR



# Riverfront and Downtown Development Plan Grand-Falls Windsor

Town of Grand Falls-Winsor

MAY 2009



**Contact Information:**

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**In association with:**





## Executive Summary

The Grand Falls-Windsor Riverfront and Downtown Development Plan was prepared for the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor to provide a conceptual master plan for the lands along the Exploits River and the downtown core focused on High Street. The plan area encompasses a scenic river that is a tremendous asset to the town but has been used for industry purposes and is largely inaccessible to the public, a downtown main street planned in the early 1900s with heritage attributes such as an original roundabout and the gathering hall and a large area of land along the riverfront that is under developed and owned primarily by the Town.

This report intends to document the planning process and capture the many ideas that have evolved throughout the duration of the plan. The report highlights the key learnings from the background review and research, summarizes the input received from the public through a visioning workshop, stakeholder interviews and a public open house, details the concept plan ideas, estimates the economic impacts of the plan and provides direction on the next steps towards the implementation of the plan. The main elements of the plan include the parks and open space area along the riverfront, the High Street public realm improvements, the tourism area and the residential development.

Each piece of the plan benefits and strengthens the other. The parks and open space area and the High Street improvements are the parts of the plan that the municipality can begin right away and primarily involve public dollars to execute. This would include the wide open space area containing trails and interpretative places along the rivers edge that officially becomes protected public lands. Three key parks within this open space area include the expanded boat launch and riverside park including a formal boardwalk at the waters edge and enough space for many boats, the gorge park with its impressive views captured from the lookouts and a historic and tourism themed park near the Old Valley Road Cemetery. The park land will be an extraordinary amenity for the community and tourists. The High Street public realm improvements will give grandeur back to High Street as it once had and make it a place for people first. Improved sidewalks, street furniture, plazas, a memorable roundabout and façade improvements will give High Street a needed visual 'facelift'. A new library or multi-functional community building on the former Co-op site will provide High Street with that signature building to left the current architectural standards and to provide the critical and symbolic link from High Street to the river. The tourism area including a hotel and the residential development along the riverfront lands will take much longer to evolve as the economic and market conditions need to be right for the private sector to invest in these types of projects. These longer term projects will take time and a commitment from the current and future Councils to see it through and the final developments make look very difference from what the plan proposes today as policies, markets, socio-economic and cultural changes shape future development trends.

. Further studies and design development will take the plan closer to reality. These will be important changes to the riverfront and downtown area of Grand Falls-Windsor for the current residents and future generations. As with all plans, this conceptual master plan should be used as a guide and an evaluation tool for any future development proposals within the plan area and deviations from the intent of the master plan should be carefully considered and supported when improvements are made. This conceptual master plan is just the beginning of the development process for the riverfront and downtown areas



# Contents

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## Executive Summary

### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 Purpose of the Study – The Opportunity
- 1.2 Study Process
- 1.3 Existing Conditions
  - 1.3.1 Regional Context
  - 1.3.1 Town Overview
  - 1.3.3 Study Area
  - 1.3.4 History/Heritage
  - 1.3.5 Existing Riverfront & Downtown Conditions
- 1.4 Opportunities & Challenges
  - 1.4.1 Opportunities
  - 1.4.2 Challenges

### 2.0 Project Vision & Principles

- 2.1 Placemaking Rules for a Great Water/Riverfront
- 2.2 Case Studies
- 2.3 Public Visioning Workshop
  - 2.3.1 The Consultation Process
  - 2.3.2 The Visioning Workshop
  - 2.3.3 Recurring Themes
  - 2.3.4 Incorporating Results into the Planning Process
- 2.4 Vision
- 2.5 Project Principles & Objectives

### 3.0 Concept

- 3.1 Early Ideas
  - 3.1.1 The Co-op Site
- 3.1.2 Synergy of Uses
- 3.2 Concept Plan
- 3.3 Plan Timing
- 3.4 Concept Plan Details
  - 3.4.1 Riverfront Open Space Area
  - 3.4.2 High Street Area
  - 3.4.3 Tourism Area
  - 3.4.4 Residential Area

### 4.0 Implementation

- 4.1 Results from the Public Open House
- 4.2 Zoning & Policy Changes Municipal Plan
- 4.3 Economic Rationale
- 4.4 Cost Estimate
- 4.5 Conclusion & Recommendations





## 1.0 Background

This first section of the report "Background" introduces the study, its role and importance, and provides background information on the existing conditions of the study area: the downtown and riverfront lands in Grand Falls-Windsor. This section will answer a number of questions: Why do we need a downtown and riverfront plan? What existing assets can the plan take advantage of? What are the opportunities and challenges in the area?

In this section you will find:

Section 1.1 – "Purpose of the Study" describes the intentions of the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor in commissioning the study.

Section 1.2 - "Study Process" describes the process in which the plan was developed including the public involvement.

Section 1.3 – "Existing Conditions" describes the physical boundary of the study area, history of the town, the regional context, and the existing circumstances, features and physical structure of the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor.

Section 1.4 – "Opportunities and Challenges" explains the initial assessment of the area by the project team of the opportunities and challenges in the study area and for the plan.



# 1.0 Background

## 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

As described in the Request in August 2008 Proposals (RFP) issued by the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor, the purpose of the study is

*"to guide the Grand Falls-Windsor Town Council as it enhances the business and recreation environment in the riverfront of the Exploits River and the downtown area."*

According to the RFP, creating a plan for this area allows Council to capitalize on its existing infrastructure while pursuing new opportunities and concepts for development. Council aspires to create a recreational, cultural, residential, tourism, entertainment and retail cluster where sectors can thrive on the synergy generated by each other.

In short, the purpose of the plan is to:

- Articulate a vision for the Exploits riverfront & downtown Grand Falls-Windsor balancing community needs and the Town's needs
- Produce a comprehensive physical plan for the riverfront & downtown that is in line with the vision
- Recommend strategies that will direct the short and long term actions

Tract Consulting Inc. and its team including PHB Group, Gardner Pinfold Consulting, Ekistics Planning & Design and Hanscomb were retained in October 2008 to begin the Grand Falls-Windsor Riverfront and Downtown development Plan. With the first site visit, a couple of key observations were made by the consultant team: (1) the river and the gorge area were a very compelling and dramatic physical setting that is fairly inaccessible and

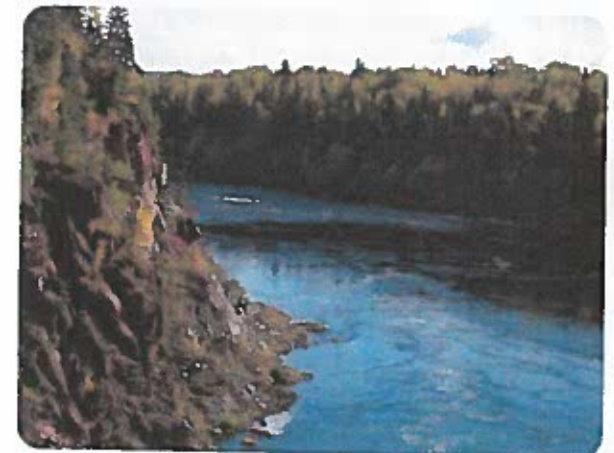
hidden amongst the backdrop of the industrial lands of the mill, the municipal depot and the residential development on Valley Road (2) the downtown (High Street area) is compact and definable with good proportions but is very disconnected from the river and (3) approaching the area from the highway, especially from the east via Scott Avenue, both the river and High Street are not visible to the passerby and are easy to miss.

Waterfront and riverfront lands in any community are too valuable to be forgotten and ignored as former industrial sites and without any access by the public. Waterfront and riverfront lands are a tremendous public asset that when used and promoted as such, can be a showcase for a community, a key destination for visitors and generate a renewed sense of community pride. What wasn't as visible to consultant team during those first site visits but became very apparent with further investigation was the care and respect that the citizens of Grand Falls-Windsor have for the aquatic habitat and ecology of the Exploits River. This is evident through the work of the not-for-profit Environment Resources Management Association (ERMA) whose vision was for the Exploits River to become a world class salmon river and was again emphasized during the project's public workshop. Unfortunately, the only visual evidence of this environmental stewardship of the river is the Salmonid Centre, located on the south side of the river and is one of the largest tourism visitor sites in Central Newfoundland.

When the project began in the fall of 2008, the closing of the Abitibi Bowater Pulp and Paper Mill in March 2009 was not foreseen. The mill was the original economic engine of the town that had prosperous as well as difficult times over its 100 years of operation. It has been stated that the mill closing will impact approximately 1,000 jobs in the region. At this time of uncertainty in Grand Falls-Windsor's history, it becomes more important than ever to again look to the river for a new focus for the town, but this time not on industry but rather a renewal of the waters edge as a place for public life to thrive, residents to recreate and for tourists to enjoy. Despite the unfortunate event of the mill closing, the time is right to gain government support to turn the riverfront and downtown plan into a reality.



Exploits river view from Grand Falls



Exploits River

## 1.0 Background

### 1.2 STUDY PROCESS & METHODOLOGY

The study process is represented on the timeline as shown. The timeline only represents the steps in completing this study as the first phase in the development process, the master planning stage. Subsequent steps to realize the development of the project would include: concept design & development, construction contract documents, tendering and construction contract administration. The process for these steps is not included in this report.

No planning process can be successful without public input. The planning process for the Riverfront and Downtown Development Plan was designed to have four key touch points with the community in the form of an open public workshop/visioning session, stakeholder interviews, a workshop with Town Council and a public open house to received feedback on the plan. These events are described further in the report. It is important to note that the recommendations, concepts and initiatives described in this report are based not only on careful study and professional assessment but on the aspirations and information conveyed by the residents and business owners in Grand Falls-Windsor.

The planning process was broken down into five phases.

**Phase 1:** Project Initiation involved the initial meeting with the Town, finalizing the contract, and site visits.

**Phase 2:** Research and Case Studies included an in-depth review of all background information, initial assessments, understanding of site opportunities and constraints, case studies, stakeholder interviews and a public workshop/visioning session.

**Phase 3:** Creating the Plan included a design meeting (charrette) with the Town staff, creating the draft concept and ideas, and presenting the concept to Council.

**Phase 4:** Finalizing the Plan involved making any changes to the concept requested by the Town and Council, preparing the draft report, creating final drawings, compiling cost estimates and phasing and creating design guidelines and the implementation strategy.

**Phase 5:** Plan Presentation included the public open house and presentation on the draft plan and the completion of the final report.

Phase 1

Phase 2

Phase 3

November

December

January

February

Project Initiation  
Nov 6, 2008

Site visits and  
background  
review begins

Public notification  
of Workshop ( advertiser & the  
Telegram ) Last  
week of November

Public Workshop  
Dec 4, 2008

Case Study  
review

Results of  
Workshop  
summarized and  
posted on the  
Town's website

Developing  
preliminary  
concepts for  
the plan

Design meeting  
with Town Staff  
Jan 28

Testing and  
refining ideas

Workshop  
with Council

Stakeholder  
interviews  
conducted

### 1.3 EXISTING CONDITIONS/ASSETS

#### 1.3.1 REGIONAL CONTEXT

The town of Grand Falls-Windsor is located in central Newfoundland and Labrador along the province's largest river, the Exploits River. The town has a current population of approximately 15,000 people and was first settled in 1905 when newspaper barons from London established the site for Newfoundland's first pulp and paper mill. The site of the mill was chosen because its proximity to the forest resource, the river for transporting the logs and the grand falls to provide hydro electric power to the town and the mill. The former towns of Grand Falls and Windsor (formerly Grand Falls Station) developed separately, Grand Falls was developed around the mill and Windsor was developed around the railway line. The two towns were amalgamated in 1991 to form the town of Grand Falls-Windsor. The Trans Canada Highway runs through the centre of town.

Grand Falls-Windsor is located 456 km west of the City of St. John's and 272 km east of the City of Corner Brook. The town acts as the central service area for the south coast of Newfoundland (Fortune Bay & Bay D'Espoir areas) and the surrounding population including the towns of Badger and Bishop's Falls. The town has the third largest health care centre in the province and being centrally located in the

region it is the home of five major transportation companies. People are employed in a variety of industries including health care, natural resources (forestry, aquaculture and mining), information technology as well as transport/transportation. The Gander International Airport is located about a one hour drive east of Grand-Falls Windsor in the town of Gander.

Grand Falls-Windsor has a number of tourist destinations and is centrally located for access to attractions in central Newfoundland. The town annually hosts the Salmon Festival, a five-day regional celebration focused on music, food and migrating salmon that has been running for 25 years. The Salmonid Interpretation Centre draws approximately 15,000-20,000 tourists annually with its many interests including a salmon ladder, underwater viewing areas, aquariums and displays on the biology, ecology and life cycles of freshwater fish. Other destinations include the Mary March Provincial Museum and the Logger's Life Provincial Museum which highlight the life of the Beothuks, the now extinct aboriginal people of Newfoundland, and the life of the early loggers in the region.



#### Phase 4

#### Phase 5

March

April

May

Presentation of DRAFT Concept to Town Staff & Council Mar 12

Make Changes to DRAFT concept

Prepare DRAFT report with implementaton Strategy

Prepare cost estimates

Public Open House on DRAFT concept Plan April 22

Compile public comments from Open House

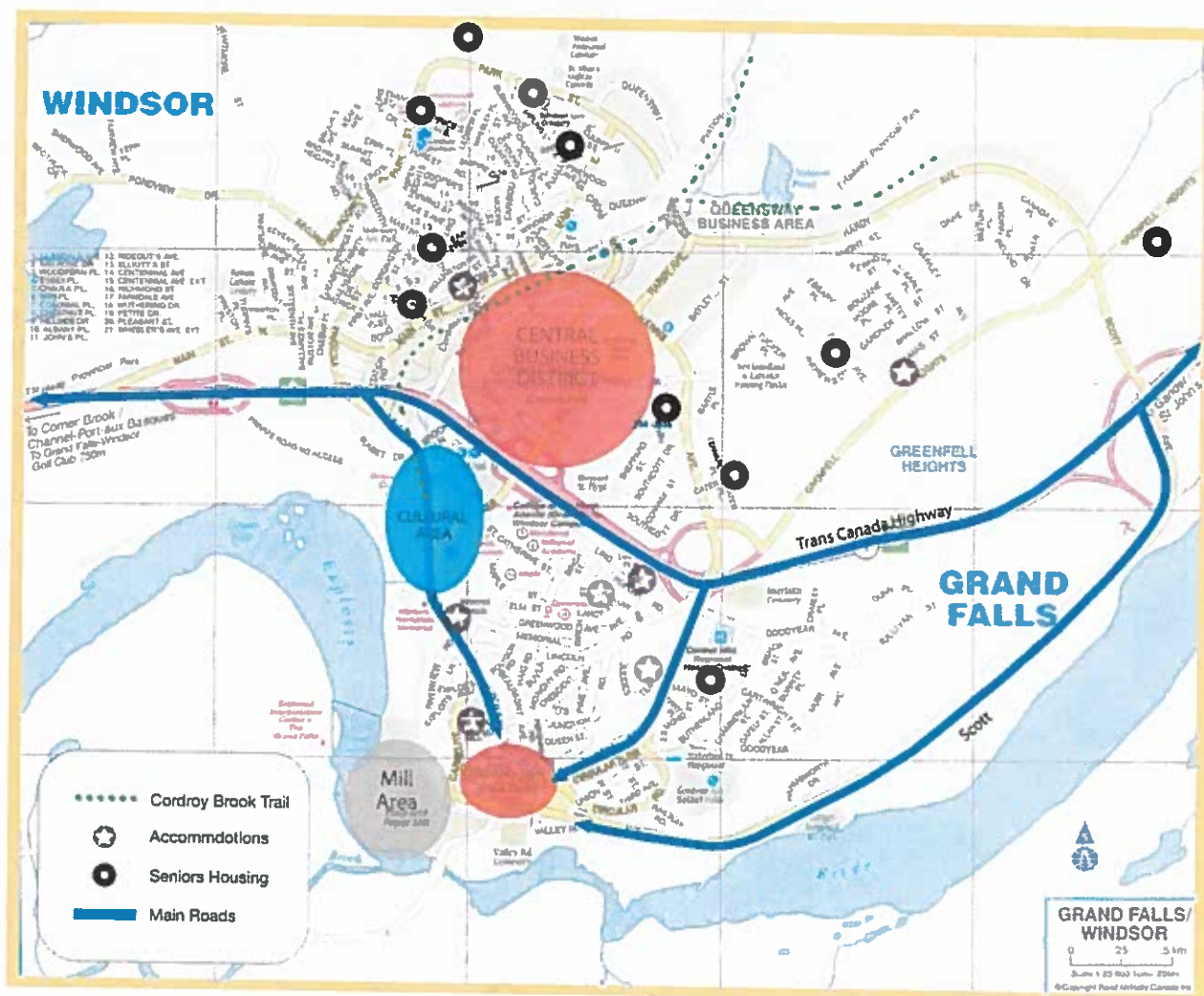
Make any changes required to the plan

Prepare and submit FINAL report

## 1.0 Background

### 1.3.2 TOWN OVERVIEW

In order to understand any place, it is important to first understand the broader context for the area. The map indicates the overall town structure. The Trans Canada Highway (TCH) runs through the middle of town separating the two former towns of Grand Falls and Windsor. The main commercial area is located on the north side of the TCH and includes many restaurants, retail stores such as Walmart, supermarket and the Exploits Valley Mall. The three main access points into the downtown from the TCH are from the west, Lincoln Road, Union Street and from the east Scott Avenue. High Street is the original downtown and is located close to the pulp and paper mill. The cultural area is located just south of the TCH and contains the Mary March Provincial Museum, the Gordon Pinsent Centre for the Arts, the Curling Club, Centennial Park (where the Salmon Festival is held), College of the North Atlantic, and the Memorial Grounds. The map also indicates where the town's accommodations are located and the Corduroy Brook Trail.



### 1.3.3 STUDY AREA & LAND OWNERSHIP

The study area is located on the southern edge of town and along the north bank of the Exploits River. The study area consists of approximately 360 acres of land and includes the High Street area of downtown (see Figure??).

The lands within the study area are primarily owned by the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor however some of the land west of the Old Valley Road Cemetery is owned by Abitibi Bowater and there are a number of private holdings along High Street. The Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society is in the process of acquiring land west of the cemetery from Abitibi Bowater to develop a new building.



## 1.0 Background

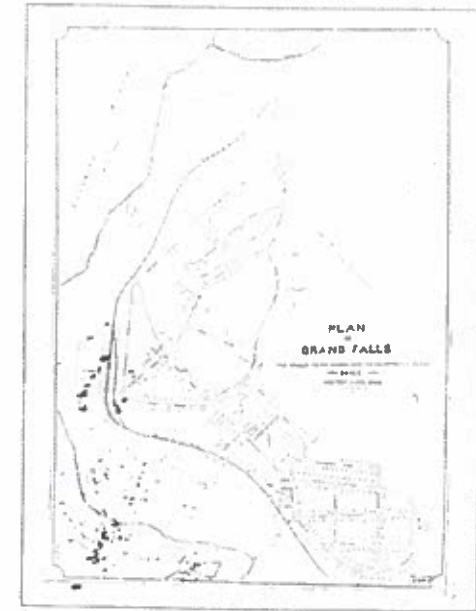
### 1.3.4 HISTORY/HERITAGE

The history of Grand Falls-Windsor is unique compared to the traditional coastal development that occurred in Newfoundland. The development of the railway opened up the interior of the island and began to attract interest in the natural resources in the interior.



With the threat of war in Europe in the early 1900's newspaper barons of the daily mail in Britain looked to central Newfoundland for a secure source of newsprint. Brothers Alfred and Harold Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe and Lord Rothermere) decided on the site at the grand falls along the Exploits River for their new pulp and paper mill. Lord Northcliffe was very interested in the town planning practices of Ebenezer Howard, who in the late 1800s advocated blended the best of the city amenities with the best of the countryside in what we now consider our modern 'suburbs'. Lord Northcliffe commissioned a company out of St. John's to draw up a town plan for Grand Falls based on Howard's 'garden city' concept and in 1905 construction began through his new enterprise the Anglo Newfoundland Development Company (A.N.D. Co.).

The original townsite consisted of the mill, a town centre focused on High Street, two residential districts and a recreational area. The houses were arranged on large lots with front and rear 'garden's based on Howard's model, the rows of lots would have been very unusual compared to traditional settlement patterns. The construction program for the town lasted for about 6 years and a total of 485 houses and 50 other buildings were constructed including a hospital, schoolhouses and churches. As only mill employees could be leaseholders in Grand Falls, the town of Grand Falls Station (Windsor) grew up north of the train station and it quickly became a bustling economic centre. As



Grand Falls Plan - 1907



Flat rock wall



First row wall on Church Road



South Hill street lamp



Liberty Bell in Grand Falls



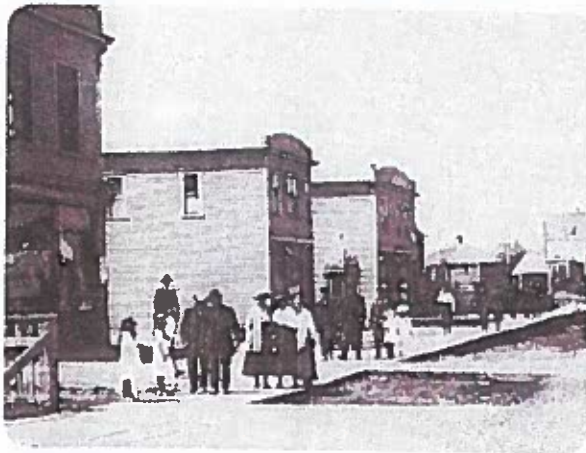
Green Pasture



View of High Street and Tower Hill



## 1.0 Background



Highway Street



View of High Street with view of mill building



View of High Street



View of Columbus Building on Church Road

both towns grew, Grand Falls Station was incorporated as a town in 1938 as the Town of Windsor. Grand Falls was a 'closed company town' until 1961 when Abitibi-Price took ownership of the Mill and gave control of the town lands to its citizens. The two towns amalgamated in 1991 forming the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor.

With a connection to this history, there some remaining

elements in the landscape within the downtown area. The current town hall building (formerly Harmsworth Hall) is a registered heritage structure with the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador. The building has been designated a heritage building because of its historical and architectural values. The hall used to be used by the community as a theatre, playhouse and meeting hall, was given to the new municipality as a town hall and is still being used for that purpose today. The Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador have identified one other building in Grand Falls-Windsor as having some level of significance as a municipal heritage building, structure or land and it is St. Matthew's Presbyterian Church located on Church Road. Other sites within the town are on the Heritage Foundation's inventory but have no status and they include the Notre Dame Knights of Columbus building, Immaculate Conception Roman Catholic Church and the parish office and the United and Anglican churches all located on Church Road.

Aside from the structures identified by the Heritage Foundation, other compelling features in the cultural landscape of downtown that enhance the character of Grand Falls-Windsor are the Old Valley Road Cemetery, the mural painted on the Johnson Insurance building on High Street, the red brick walls in the residential areas around High Street, the housing stock, churches and tree lined street of Church Road, Grand Falls house, and the mill building.



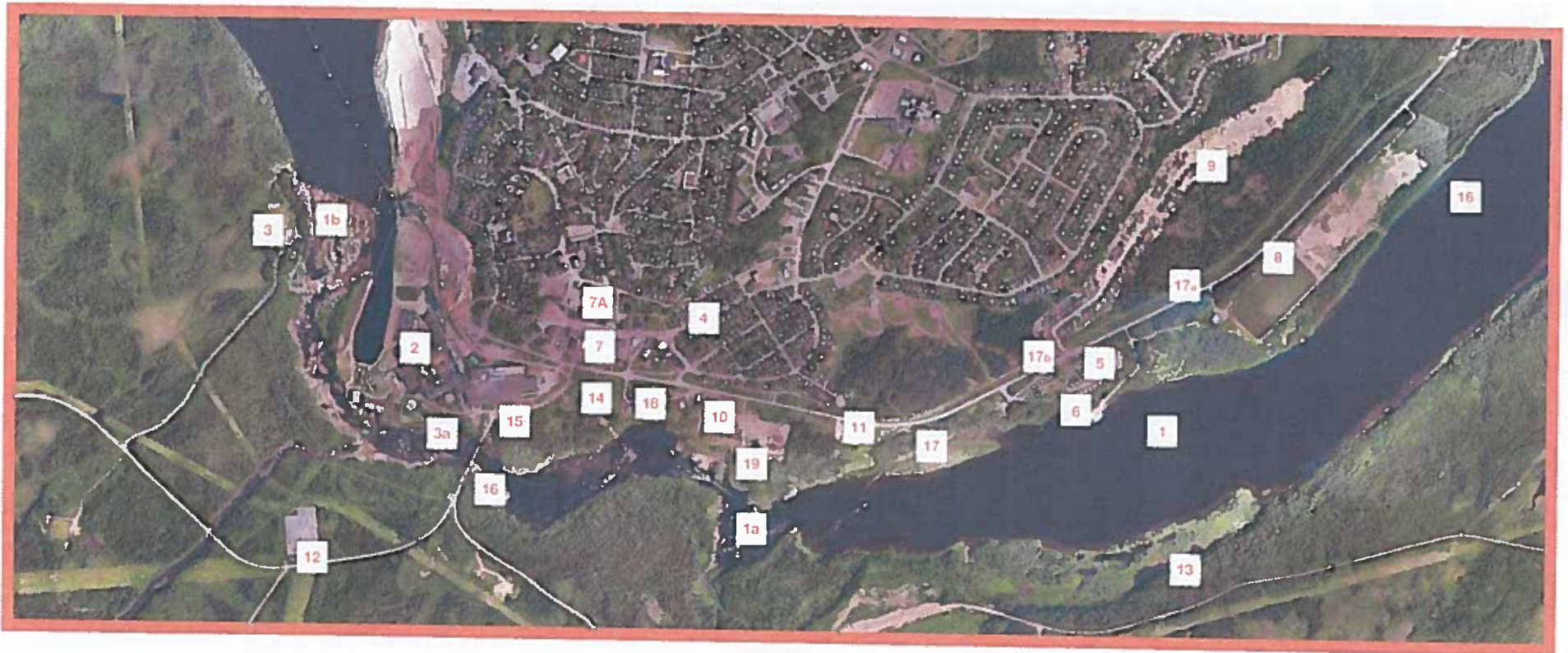
Town of Grand Falls-Windsor Town Hall



View of roundabout in Grand Falls

## 1.0 Background

### 1.3.5 EXISTING RIVERFRONT & DOWNTOWN CONDITIONS





The Exploits River is the province's largest river, is over 246 kilometres long and has over 25,000 salmon migrate through it each year. The Exploits is considered to have some of the best salmon fishing in Canada. Salmon fishing on the Exploits is a highly protected activity by the local fishermen and licenses are not readily available. The river has been well known for its wildlife, such as salmon, woodland

caribou, moose and black bear, and also for its natural resources including forestry, minerals and hydro electrical power. The river has become a tourist destination for whitewater rafters and canoeists and has been well known for flooding.

The Exploits River was the last refuge for the now extinct native people of Newfoundland, the Beothuks. The Beothuks were known to have wintered along the Exploits River and Red Indian Lake where they hunted caribou.

The Exploits River within the boundary of Grand Falls-Windsor has a variety of qualities: it is a wide, calm river with gently sloping banks near the Sanger Memorial RV Park, it is a turbulent, rugged river through the high cliffs of the gorge and the peculiar Indian Head rock (1A), and it is a rocky, industrialized river near the mill and the grand falls (1B).



The Abitibi Bow Water Pulp and Paper Mill announced in December 2008 that it will be closing in March 2009 with operations halting by the end of the 2008. It has been stated that approximately 1,000 jobs in the central region will be impacted; the full impacts are still unknown. The mill was the first employer in Grand Falls, has been in operation for nearly 100 years and is the reason for the existence of the town.



Salmonid Interpretation Centre is located on the south side of the Exploits River near the grand falls. The centre was developed by a not-for-profit association called the Environment Resources Management Association (ERMA) who worked with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to make the project happen. The centre consists of two fishways, a restaurant, a gift shop and the interpretation building that has

displays on biology, ecology and life cycles of fish as well as an underwater viewing area. Fish stock enhancement is a main goal of the centre and ERMA. Others have joined the cause with the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor constructing a sewage treatment plant along the river and Abitibi Bowater

have invested millions to treat their effluent. The Salmonid Centre attracts approximately 20,000 tourists out of 41,000 in the area annually. Access to the centre is via the Abitibi Bowater logging bridge (3A) whose ownership is currently being disputed with the Province. The Salmonid Centre is about a 2.5 km drive along a gravel road past the mill.



4

Garden City heritage – The original townsite of Grand Falls was planned in 1905 and was designed based on Ebenezer Howard's garden city model. The garden city movement was an approach to town planning that became popular in the early 1900s and was founded by Ebenezer Howard in England. Garden cities were intended to be complete, self-contained communities laid out in radial pattern that

orchestrated a balance of residential, industrial and agricultural areas. The town plan for Grand Falls consisted of 5 areas: the mill lands, the town centre, two residential areas and a recreational area. Although the original residential areas of Grand Falls-Windsor do not look particularly unique today, the notion of houses located on large lots laid out in a regular pattern with 'gardens' at the rear and the front was derived from the garden city movement and a very unusual development pattern in Newfoundland at the time. Many of the original mill houses still exist within the first residential areas.



5

Sanger Memorial RV Park is located along the riverfront and is a fully serviced RV park with showers, washrooms, and electrical outlets. The RV park contains 38 sites and is owned and operated by the Town. It is a very busy spot in the summer with approximately 2,500 visitors a year and generates approximately \$5 000 annually in revenue. Sanger Park has many repeat customers from Newfoundland, Canada

and the United States who use the area as their base while visiting the Central Region. Sanger Park is named after the Sanger family who were generous contributors to the park.



6

The boat launch was constructed by the Town near the RV park. It is the only formal place to access the river and has become a gathering place for local residents as well as tourists. There are no signs marking the location and the boat launch is accessed via a gravel road. The boat launch is connected to formal and informal trails near the RV park.



7

High Street is the main commercial street in downtown Grand Falls-Windsor. Currently the predominant land use on High Street is office use. There is limited retail along High Street and many vacant sites and buildings. The Town Hall (originally Harnsworth Hall) is a Provincially Registered Heritage Structure. The Joe Byrne Memorial Stadium (7A) is situated just behind buildings on High Street with a small plaza entrance off Jones Street. The Stadium is a newly renovated building and is the home of the local hockey team. The view of High Street from from Scott Avenue is of the rear of buildings, loading areas and unmarked parking areas.



8

The sewage lagoon for the town is located along the river and an expansion is planned to the east.



9

The new Harnsworth subdivision is located on the north side of Scott Ave and is selling fairly rapidly. It offers new, larger single family homes in close proximity to the river.



10

The Town's Recreation depot site is a large area of land along the river front. The town's composting area is located here as well as storage for equipment.

## 1.0 Background



The helicopter pad is somewhat new and is used mostly for mineral exploration by private companies. It was located in this area to minimize noise impacts to residents.



An electrical substation is located along the main logging road that leads to the Salmonid Centre.



The south side of the river is not within the study area but there possibilities on these lands have been discussed within the context of the study. Access to the south side of the river is via the Abitibi Bowater logging bridge and the gravel logging roads.



Town's original graveyard, the Old Valley Road Cemetery. It dates back to the early 1900s and has approximately 300 gravesites.



The Heritage Society currently have an agreement in place with Abitibi Bowater for land adjacent to the mill as the location of a new Heritage Society office/centre. The Heritage Centre is planned to be a log house design (reminiscent of the first home of Harmsworth in Grand Falls-Windsor) and is to be located near the bridge to capture the tourists visiting the Salmonid Centre.



Many salmon pools for fishing are located throughout the river especially in areas close to the mill and further downstream. See Figure ?? for approximate locations of the salmon pools as provided by the local fishermen.



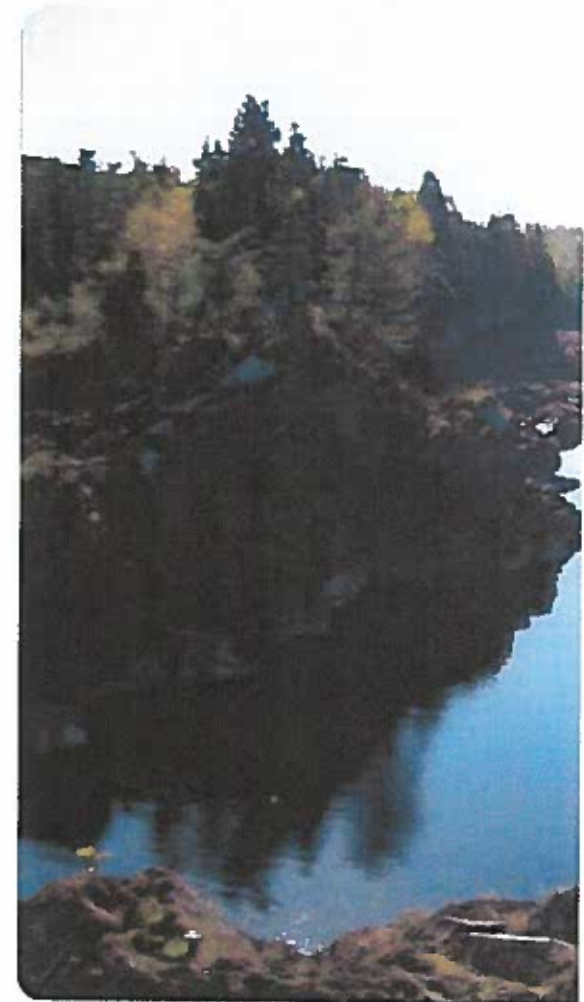
Throughout the area along the river's edge there are existing informal and formal trails. Some trails have been created by people using the area other portions have been cleared and paved with crushed rock by the Town. A trail runs along the pole alignment (17A) on the north side of Scott Avenue. This trail has a connection to Sanger Park via a pedestrian underpass (17B) under Scott Avenue.



One of the older residential areas in town that is located along the river's edge is the Valley Road residential area. Many of the houses along Valley Road back onto the steep cliffs of the river's edge.



Behind the municipal depot and overlooking the gorge of the river is a park area the Town has created. There is a gazebo and look offs in roughly this location.





## 1.4 OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

### 1.4.1 OPPORTUNITIES

#### River

It cannot be overstated, the tremendous asset of the river to the town of Grand Falls-Windsor. As mentioned previously and ever so obvious from the photographs, the river is the study area's greatest opportunity. The river, although an asset in its current state, it is truly an untapped opportunity that could be more assessable to more residents and provide an increase of funds to the town to assist in the financing of new parks and amenities without sacrificing the riverfront lands. Waterfronts and riverfronts in communities, although traditionally often used for industry purposes can be recaptured for public uses such as parks, open space, passive and active recreation purposes for residents and tourists to enjoy.

## 1.0 Background

### Landownership

The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor owns the majority of the riverfront lands within the study area. This is a great advantage as the Town can exercise control and apply policies and guidelines to the riverfront lands to ensure any development meets certain standards and is of the highest quality. The Town can offer incentives to ensure that what gets built in this area is the best it can be.

### Developer interest

When market and financial conditions are right, developers and the private sector are responsible for much of our built environment – the good, the bad and the ugly. Developers are always looking for the next opportunity and the right locations that offer something unique to a buyer. With the Town setting the stage for the right kind of development on the riverfront, developers are and would be interested in developing the riverfront lands as they offer an unmatched setting, close to all amenities.

### Existing Tourism Base

With approximately 20,000 visitors per year, the Salmonid Centre has created a strong tourism base for the town of Grand Falls-Windsor. Sanger Memorial RV Park and the existing accommodations in town provide a base location for tourists to explore the area and the region. The plan attempts to build on this by providing more reasons for tourists to visit and spend more time in the downtown and riverfront areas.

### Housing Market

According to CMHC, the Grand Falls-Windsor housing market in terms of new housing starts has been doing very well compared to other communities with a population of over 10,000. Although the St. John's CMA typically leads the province, with 1,863 new housing starts in 2008 (up 26% over the previous year), Grand Falls-Windsor had the second highest new housing starts for 2008 outside the St. John's CMA with 115 (a 12% increase over 2007). The demographic trend for Grand Falls-Windsor is similar to Newfoundland and Canada, with an aging population. Thirty percent of the town's population is between the ages of 40-60, the baby boomers. As this group ages, there will be a greater demand for seniors housing and assisted living centres. For 2008, the percentage of single family dwelling units vs multi-unit dwellings built in Grand Falls-Windsor was approximately a 50/50 split indicating that half of the new homes built last year were likely places for seniors. Typically the single family market is much higher in Newfoundland with St. John's having a split of 80% single family homes to 20% multi-unit dwellings in 2008. This statistic for Grand Falls-Windsor may be an anomaly for 2008, however it does indicate that there is likely a market for multi-unit dwellings in the area.

#### HOUSING

- 115 new housing starts last year
- 12% increase over 2007
- 50% single family & 50% multi-family

### Funding Opportunities

With the recent closure of the mill, the provincial government is focusing more attention on Central Newfoundland. With this significant economic impact on the region, the time may be right to access funding opportunities for the development of the plan as an economic generator that will provide many amenities to the town.



## 1.4.2 CHALLENGES

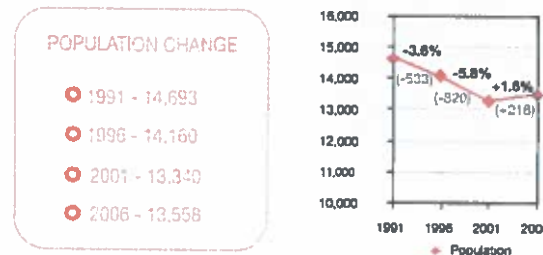
### Environmental Conditions of the Land

Much of the lands within the study area boundary along the riverfront will require environmental studies that may result in some level of environmental remediation due to the prior uses of the land such as a former land fill and an incinerator. The potential environmental issues on the land are a significant unknown for the project and may impact the implementation of components of the plan. Prior to any development occurring along the riverfront environmental studies will be required.



### Demographics

The population of Grand Falls-Windsor in 2006 was 13,558 which ranked number 5 provincially and number 274 nationally in terms of population. The area of Grand Falls-Windsor covers 54.5 km<sup>2</sup>/square kilometres and has a population density of 249 inhabitants/people per square kilometre. The population has been declining since 1991 however the last Federal Census (2006) revealed that the population increased by 1.6% from the years 2001-2006. Despite the population decline since 1991, the latest growth trend is encouraging. The current population estimate is close to 15,000 people showing a recovery to the population level of 14,693 in 1991. Development activity is typically stronger when populations are increasing and a new influx of people need homes and amenities.



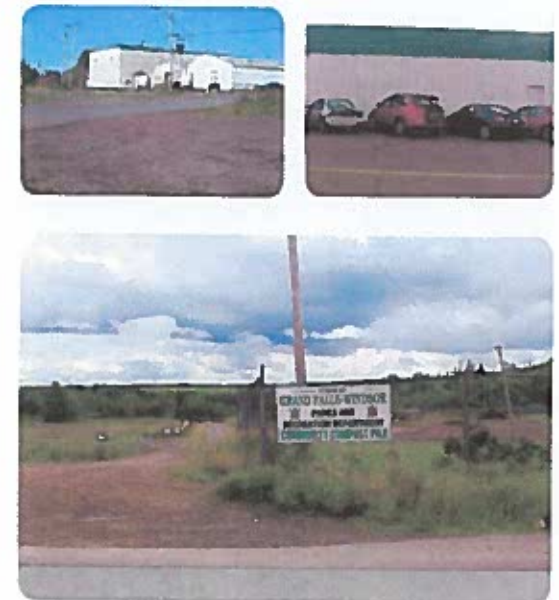
### Accessibility & Signage

Accessibility to the river is difficult and not well signed which is a deterrent for people to use the river. Access to the downtown area of Grand Falls-Windsor is not well signed from the Trans Canada Highway. There are three main roads into the downtown from the TCH that have very little directional signage. The barricades along the highway and the highway design with many ramps block any views of the town and are a deterrent for people to access the area.



### Visual Impressions

Although the town and riverfront are blessed with many beautiful areas, some locations in the study area are less attractive such as the municipal depot site on the riverfront, the rear of the properties on High Street facing Scott Avenue, as well as some vacant sites along High Street. The visual appearance of these areas needs to be addressed in the plan.



### Mill Closing

The closure of the mill will have impacts on the town, many which are still unknown. Given these current economic conditions, the timing of the development may be impacted.

## 2.0 Project Vision and Principles

This second section of the report "Project Vision and Principles" reveals the overall project vision and objectives which is based on a combination of the public workshop results, the town's intentions for the area and the professional experience and knowledge of the planners and designers involved. This section will answer a number of questions: How was the community involved and what are their aspirations? What are the best ideas from other areas? What type of place do we want to create and how do we get there?

In this section you will find:

Section 2.1 – "Placemaking Rules for a Great Water/Riverfront" is a summary of some best practices of how to create vibrant and attractive water/inverfronts developed by the Project for Public Spaces out of New York.

Section 2.2 - "Case Studies" describes a few key case studies that have very successfully implemented the core ideas of the plan.

Section 2.3 – "Public Visioning Workshop" describes the public visioning workshop in detail and the summary of the key themes that emerged.

Section 2.4 – "Vision" is a descriptive narrative that is based on the input from the public and intended to inspire and capture the imagination. The vision describes what the study area could be in the future.

Section 2.5 – "Project Principles & Objectives" highlights the four key project goals/principles and the objectives of how to achieve the goals.





## 2.0 Vision & Principles

## 2.0 Vision & Principles

### 2.1 PLACEMAKING RULES FOR A GREAT WATER/RIVERFRONT

Project for Public Spaces (PPS), founded in 1975, is a nonprofit organization out of New York whose primary function is helping and educating people to create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. Project for Public Spaces is an internationally recognized centre for best practices, information and resources around planning and placemaking. The term placemaking was first coined in the 1970s and is used to describe the process of creating squares, plazas, parks, great streets and waterfronts that attract people because they are pleasurable, interesting and have things to do. Project for Public Spaces has published many articles on creating great waterfronts and public spaces and the following is an overview of some of the ideas and objectives that are applicable to the Grand Falls-Windsor Riverfront and Downtown Development plan. The following information can be found [www.pps.org](http://www.pps.org)



#### Project for Public Spaces Key Learnings:

1. Focus on the public spaces first – prior to any development occurring on a waterfront/riverfront, the public spaces, parks, pathways and connections should be determined first and any development should be focused around these public spaces. Although private development is often necessary to achieving a healthy waterfront/riverfront, private development must promote the idea that the waterfront/riverfront is primarily a public asset.
2. Build on existing assets & create a vision – Start with the existing assets and attributes of a place through research and the input from the public to create a shared community vision.
3. Tapping the power of 10 – This idea states that every place, neighbourhood and town should have at least 10 destinations with several things to do and that the more things there are to do in a place, the more beloved, remembered, and important that place will become.
4. Libraries are becoming a strong force in placemaking – Many libraries are starting to do more than just lend books, they are becoming civic centres that foster a sense of community, offer a unique gathering place, program beyond their building and help to give a place an identity.
5. A lively place 12 months of the year – This is always a struggle in any place – how to keep it lively and active all year round despite the weather. The key is in strong programming and management so that in winter months public places and parks feature a program of activities such as ice skating, holiday markets and temporary 'ice cafes'.
6. Connect destinations along a water/riverfront – Destinations along the waters edge should connect to one another and incorporate a vision for the whole area. To avoid too much passive space that dampens the liveliness of an area, other active uses need to be present to draw people such as public programs at different times of the year and having a population that live adjacent to the amenity. Use parks as connective tissue to link key destinations.
7. Maximize opportunities for public access – Waterfronts with continuous public access are much more popular than those where public space is interrupted. The entire shoreline should be accessible to the public instead of giving waterfront property owners sole use. Public access also means that people can actually interact with the water in a variety of ways such as boating, swimming, feeding ducks, etc.
8. Balance environmental benefits with human needs – Successful destinations usually embrace their natural surroundings and promote the restoration of the natural shoreline. The natural surroundings can include boardwalks, interpretive displays and active areas such as for picnics without sacrificing the environment.



9. Start small to make big changes - Good public spaces don't happen overnight and it usually involves more than just the design of the space, it includes community involvement and programming. Plans usually start with short term, achievable goals even as small as planting flowers to spur confidence in an area.

Learnings from the Project of Public Spaces as well as the public input on the project assisted in creating the vision, principles and objectives for the project.



## CASE STUDIES 2.2

A number of regional case studies were looked at and considered for the Grand Falls-Windsor Riverfront and Development Plan. These case studies are real life examples of how ideas can make significant change. These ideas have been applied to the Grand Falls-Windsor Riverfront and Downtown Development Plan.

### Façade Improvement Program Sydney & North Sydney, Nova Scotia

As with all façade improvement programs, they are based on two core ideas:

1. The public should invest in improvements to the public realm.
2. This investment allows 'public' input into the nature of these improvements.

The façade improvement programs in Nova Scotia have followed three models:

- a. Municipal funds administered by the municipality,
- b. a mixture of federal and municipal funds administered by the Provincial Development Authority (RDA) or by a local merchants association with funds from ACOA administered by the RDA, and
- c. two business improvement commissions (BIDC) have undertaken façade improvement programs using funds from their area tax rate.



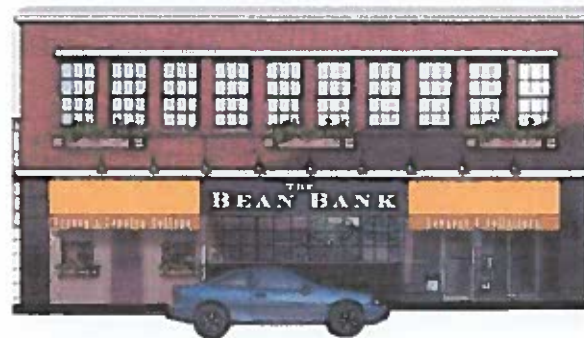
Sydney and North Sydney followed the second model (b). The funds came from Enterprise Cape Breton and the RDA. In the case of Sydney the funds were administered by the local BIDC or Merchants Association. In the case of North Sydney, the program was administered by planner hired by the Municipality, likely with funds from Enterprise Cape Breton, to administer the program and perform other planning tasks.

The programs in Sydney and North Sydney both provided 50% cost sharing for specified improvements to public facades in a defined district to a maximum of \$25,000 for the public share for each public facade. Corner buildings had two qualifying facades.

The program started with a study to generate interest, demonstrate possibilities, coordinate colour and style, and define eligible improvements. In North Sydney and Sydney most of the buildings in the defined district have used the program funding.

The streets look better and public funds have been leveraged at a minimum rate of 200%. The average improvement has probably exceeded the program cap of \$50,000 so each public dollar has resulted in two or three dollars of local construction activity.

The retail result is also clear. Most retail establishments are aware of the "business bump" that occurs after a major store redecoration. Grinners Food Service (Greco Pizza and many KFC's) tell their operators that they will have a 10% business increase for at least a year after renovation. They say the minimum business increase they actually experience is 15% and that it lasts for up to two years and sometimes longer.



### New Public Library as a Catalyst to Revitalization New Glasgow, Nova Scotia

Project for Public Spaces (PPS), a NYC based firm of public space planners, have stated that one of the big trends in downtown revitalization of this century is the emergence of the library as the new 'town square'.

This phenomenon can be seen in action in Nova Scotia. In New Glasgow Nova Scotia the library organized a session with PPS to plan their downtown and riverfront area. This place making exercise led to the production of a plan for the area which is being implemented at a rapid rate.

The library programs space in the downtown area, cautiously extending beyond the bounds of their building. They set up tables on the sidewalk and sell hotdogs to their customers. They host office space for community groups and act as a focus for numerous downtown activities. They are adding community rooms, performance spaces, and extending to animate an adjacent park with public gathering space. The library has brought life back to the downtown of New Glasgow.



## 2.0 Vision & Principles



### Kiosks as a Retail Incubator

Pictou, Nova Scotia, Halifax, Nova Scotia & St. John's, Newfoundland

The idea of a kiosk as a retail incubator is fairly well proven. In Pictou, Nova Scotia the new waterfront street needed some retail attraction. Since there were many empty stores in town at the time, the idea of creating some small kiosks that could be rented on a short term to host new retail enterprises seemed like a low risk idea.

The two or three kiosks they built have generated several permanent business ventures that have moved to year-round stores in town.

The same has been true on the Halifax waterfront where at least two businesses that started in kiosks on the waterfront now have permanent business locations in the area.

At a minimum, the kiosk can animate an area and give an excuse, or a reason, for someone to visit a developing section of town. And, as a bonus, most of them actually make a small profit for the agency that builds and rents the kiosks.

## 2.3 PUBLIC VISIONING WORKSHOP

The Visioning Workshop for the Grand Falls-Windsor Riverfront and Downtown Redevelopment Plan provided invaluable public input for the plan and will aid the consultants in creating a strong vision for the study area. With over 25 participants bringing a wide range of perspectives and ideas, this workshop is an important first step in the plan creation.

The seven key themes that emerged from the workshop were:

1. the protection of river resource and enhanced access to salmon fishing,
2. a hotel/resort on the riverfront,
3. a riverside park,
4. a variety of recreational amenities along the riverfront,
5. architectural enhancement along High Street,
6. more amenities in the downtown, and
7. more housing to attract families.

Three key themes emerged as cautionary and did not glean a lot of support were:

- A. Industrial development along the riverfront,
- B. development on the other side of the river that might have a negative visual impact on the natural landscape, and
- C. Initiatives focused on keeping the mill and wood products industry alive in Grand Falls-Windsor.

### 2.3.1 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The Visioning Workshop was one of the first steps in the overall consultation strategy for the project with the intent to gain upfront public input. In addition to the workshop, other early consultations have occurred for the project including individual stakeholder interviews and an informal workshop with the Grand Falls-Windsor Town Council.

### 2.3.1 THE VISIONING WORKSHOP

The Visioning Workshop for the Grand Falls-Windsor Riverfront and Downtown Redevelopment Plan was held on Thursday, December 4, 2008 at the Hotel Robin Hood 6:00-9:30pm and was the initial public input opportunity for the plan. The workshop was advertised in the local paper, on the Town's website, on the CBC morning show and key stakeholders were contacted by phone and email. Many of the 28 attendees were interested members of the general public but organizations such as the Salmon Fishermen Committee, Cordroy Brook Nature Trail Board, the Grand Falls-Windsor Heritage Society, the Exploits Valley Economic Development Corporation as well as a variety of small and large business owners and managers were also represented. The purpose of the workshop was to capture ideas and input from the public and interested groups regarding what the downtown and riverfront lands could look like in the future. The workshop was an opportunity for people to explore ideas without worrying about the viability and feasibility of the ideas. The workshop also allowed the consultants to gain valuable information and input about the area that only the local residents and business people would know.

The workshop agenda guided the event. The agenda began with brief introductions of the consultant team and the Town staff, an informal presentation by the consultant team containing an overview about the purpose of the project and the workshop as well as some past projects of a similar nature to start to generate ideas. Once the presentation was complete, 4 exercises followed that required the attendees' involvement on different levels.

#### EXERCISE 1 - A Day in the Life of a Grand Falls-Windsor Resident

This exercise was done in a large group. With a timeline pinned on the wall, the group was asked to imagine what activities they might be doing at various

times of the day in 15-20 years from now as a resident of the town. The purpose of this exercise was to find out what types of activities are important to the participants and what they value for the future.

#### EXERCISE 2 - Break-Out Sessions

This exercise was done in two smaller groups with a facilitator at each table. The facilitator asked 4 key questions and recorded comments on a flip-chart. The questions were:

1. Of the activities listed on the timeline, what ones could occur in the downtown?  
Along the river? And where?
2. What will draw visitors to this area?
3. What will attract businesses to the area?
4. What will attract people to live in this area?

Participants were asked, if possible, to place the ideas on the maps provided. Ideas and comments were recorded on the flipcharts and formed the basis of the following exercises.

#### EXERCISE 3 - Group Presentation

The flipchart sheets were pinned to the walls and one representative of each of the groups was asked to present the ideas discussed.

#### EXERCISE 4 - Dot Mocracy

With the presentations finished, each participant was given 3 green dots and 3 red dots and was asked to place them beside the ideas on the flipchart sheets. The green dots represented "I like this idea - Go for it!", the red dots represented "I am not comfortable with this idea - It needs more work". Once all the dots were placed on the ideas, the consultants facilitated a group discussion regarding the placement of the dots. Each dot was numbered, the participants explained their choices and why they supported or didn't support the ideas, and the responses were recorded.

### 2.3.3 RECURRING THEMES

The following is a summary of the key themes of the workshop ideas. Ideas are listed in three categories: Ideas Supported (green dots), Ideas Not Supported/Need More Work (red dots) and Ideas Neither Strongly Supported nor Strongly Disliked (no dots). Themes presented are listed in order of priority, for example the first theme had the most dots of the particular colour and the last theme had the least. Many ideas did not receive any dots in the

## 2.0 Vision & Principles

dot-mocracy exercise and therefore no further detailed discussion on these topics occurred to gauge the level of support. Because the number of dots are restricted to 3 red and 3 green, people tend to use them for ideas that they have strong opinions about either support or a lack of support. Ideas that do not receive dots can be considered neutral however it typically means that the person does not have a strong opinion either way.

### Ideas Supported (green dots)

Protection and enhancement of the salmon fishing was strongly supported. This would include mapping of all salmon fishing pools and spawning areas, access for the mobility impaired through the construction of an accessible platform, increasing access - via an expanded trail network - to the fishing pools, the creation new fishing pools and having a brochure of promoting salmon fishing the Exploits, promoting the use of local fishing guides and fishing pools accessible only by boat.

A hotel/resort on the riverfront was strongly supported. Comments included creating accommodations that would be 3-5 star ranking, attractive for all seasons, situated for wildlife viewing and possibly including a convention centre. Increased accommodations for Grand Falls-Windsor was indicated as badly needed. There was some support of a hotel on High Street rather than the river front.



There was support indicated to fast track the proposed heritage centre on the river front because the land and financing are available. There was less support for the centre to have a lot of office space. The idea of a Riverside Park was strongly supported by the workshop attendees. The boat launch area has become a bit of a gathering place for residents in the summer and on times is over crowded. The enhancement of the boat launch area with the creation of a new park with a larger public gathering space(s) was supported.

Recreational amenities were strongly supported and many different recreational activities were mentioned during the workshop. The recreational activities that the riverfront development could support include walking and skiing on trails, river rafting and kayaking, bungee jumping off the bridge, extreme biking, canoeing, camping, and RVing. A children's water park (something more than the typical 'Splash n' Putt'), another RV park, a tram or cable car over the gorge, a pedestrian bridge over the river, a snowmobiling centre, and trails that link the Salmonid Centre, to the boat launch to the Cordroy trail system to for a interconnected loop were many of the ideas that were supported at the workshop. Ideas such as a tram or cable car and a pedestrian bridge required more thinking on the financial viability of these projects.

Architectural enhancement of buildings on Scott Avenue and High Street was strongly supported. Many comments were discussed on this topic including the restoration of the original facades and bringing back the old architectural themes of High Street, physically and visually linking Scott Avenue and High Street, developing the back of High Street to draw people into the area, and creating a special mixed use heritage zone for High Street that would include the original company houses of the 1910 Town Plan (Garden City) as well as architectural guidelines. Enhancing the roundabout, or 'dummy', on High Street with cobblestones and vegetation was suggested and supported as it is already a heritage site.

More amenities in the downtown were suggested and supported as good ideas including a specialty, small scale grocery store, an upgraded drop-in centre for youth and seniors, a farmers market, more shopping and dining opportunities as well as increasing the business sector. Ideas that could occur near the river included a restaurant by the gorge, expanded secondary educational opportunities that could attract more families to Grand Falls-Windsor, more tourist attractions that do not compete with the Salmonid Centre, a boardwalk with a variety of boutiques and public washrooms.

More housing to attract new families in the area was a supported idea in the workshop. A mix of housing choice such as newer homes, larger lots and apartments were discussed. Community gardens and green houses for people living in higher density housing such as apartments was also an idea that was supported.

Financial incentives such as tax breaks were discussed as a positive idea that could entice future development in the area especially and anchor tenant for High Street.

A focus on heritage (Beothucks & French loggers) incorporated into a tourism scheme were ideas that had a very low level of support. Comments were suggested regarding the promotion of Beothuck archaeological sites along the riverfront, a native people's interpretation centre, historical portage tours, and the French logging history as tourist attractions.

The riverfront should not be developed and left in its natural state. This idea generated a fair amount of debate at the workshop but ultimately had a low level of support through the dot-mocracy exercise.

### Ideas Not Supported / Need More Work (red dots)

There was a very strong lack of support for any industrial development along the riverfront. This topic was discussed at length in the workshop with some opinions in favour of the idea however, with the showing in the dot-mocracy exercise with 11 red dots, this idea generated the most negative reaction than any of the ideas presented. Many participants had mentioned that although this was the historical use(s) of the river front, it is not something the residents' desire for the future of the area.

Development on the other side of the river was an idea that was not strongly favoured. The concerns were primarily regarding negatively impacting the view of the natural landscape across the river and access across the existing private bridge near the mill. Many commented that if development was small scale and did not impact the views that some level of development in some areas could possibly occur on the far side of the river. Preservation of the natural beauty of the landscape was very important to participants. Throughout the course of the workshop the community of Humber Village on the west coast of the Island and Strawberry

## REGISTER NOW!

The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor invites you to a visioning workshop to capture your ideas for a long-term development plan for the riverfront and the downtown.

### Riverfront and Downtown Visioning Workshop

Thursday, December 4, 2008

6:00pm – 9:00pm

Hotel Robin Hood 78 Lincoln Road

Pre-registration is required please contact:

Dawn Boutlier  
Tract Consulting Inc.  
Toll Free 1.877.738.2501 ext. 11  
dawn@tractinc.net

or

Nancy Hennessy  
Town of Grand Falls-Windsor  
1.709.489.0483  
ghennessy@gfdawindsor.com



Hill development were mentioned as being a good prototype. A few people did disagree with this suggestion. Given the recent announcement that the mill was closing, a few comments surfaced regarding keeping mill and the wood products industry alive in Grand Falls-Windsor by finding a new buyer for the mill and/or secondary manufacturing of the natural wood products. Surprisingly, this idea did not generate much support from the workshop participants. The sentiment of some participants in the room was that it is time for the town to move on with a different future.

More accommodations and amenities for seniors such as a drop-in centre, a retirement village or assisted living condos were not strongly discouraged however the comments provided indicated that accommodations for seniors are already underway or exist in other areas of town and to try and avoid competition with these places.

The final ideas that generated some level of discuss but a lack of support included residential development above office and retail uses along the riverfront (it was felt these uses were more appropriately situated on High Street), a barge across the river was questioned on its viability, and finally there mixed opinions regarding whether or not the Town should acquire more land from Abitibi for development. The comment was made that there is enough land to develop before purchasing more.

#### Neither Strongly Supported nor Strongly Disliked (no dots)

High Street to become a more vibrant and vital destination that has more shopping, restaurants, entertainment, residential, office, tourism, and landscaping opportunities. Comments included enjoying the downtown in the evening as well as the daytime, having more boutiques and specialty shops such as industrial-based boutiques like Granville Island, a higher class of office space, a theatre, more people living there, and better lighting on High Street for visitor safety.

Development on the riverfront was debated and discussed throughout the workshop. Residential and tourism types development on the riverfront were mentioned the most however maintaining public access to the river's edge typically factored into the debate.



Good vehicular accessibility and parking areas for tour buses. A shuttle bus for the area was also mentioned.

Focus on environmental sustainability and green initiatives in terms of development. Cleaning up of the riverfront lands and the former landfill site.

Good signage in the area and on the Trans Canada Highway to attract and direct people to the downtown and the riverfront.

#### 2.3.4 INCORPORATING RESULTS INTO THE PLANNING PROCESS

The results from all the initial consultations especially the public visioning workshop inform the plan. The goal of the workshop was to generate as many and varied ideas as possible and to explore some of them a little further through the discussions. The plan was strongly influenced by the ideas and input from the workshop and assisted in creating the vision and principles for the project.

## 2.0 Vision & Principles

### 2.4 PROJECT PRINCIPLES & OBJECTIVES

#### 1. Enhance the river resource while protecting the aquatic habitat, important views and public access

- Expand and enhance public access, gathering places, trail systems and parks on the waters edge that can be used in all seasons
- Expand recreational water use of the river including salmon fishing
- Ensure that development does not have a negative impact on aquatic life
- Encourage uses that enhance salmon proliferation & awareness
- Protect a continuous area of public land along the waters edge
- Preserve the views of the natural environment on the south side of the river
- Provide select opportunities to view the river from Scott Avenue
- Protect the wilderness & natural feel along Scott Avenue (Avoid views of sewage lagoon & residential subdivision)
- Celebrate the gorge & "Indian Head Rock"

#### 2. Attract local residents and businesses to the downtown and riverfront to create long term economic and social vitality

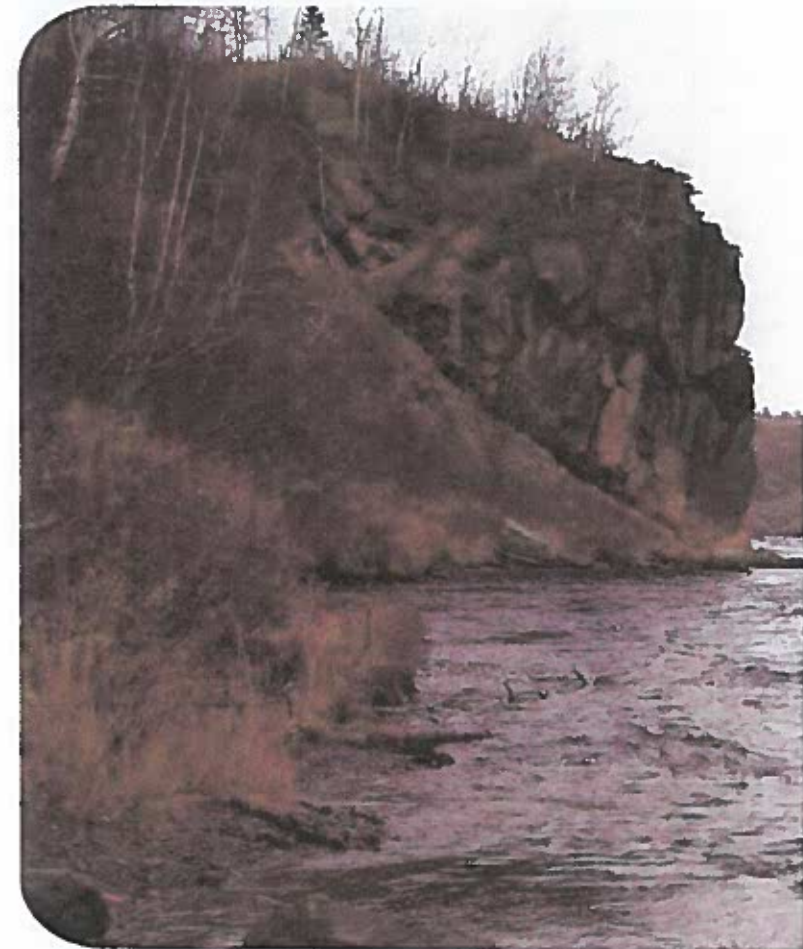
- Create and promote development opportunities on the riverfront and in the downtown
- Maintain existing and encourage new office uses on High Street
- Encourage retail, cultural, civic & community uses along the street edge of High Street
- Promote housing opportunities & choice in the area
- Program activities for existing & proposed parks spaces
- Promote the Co-op site on High Street as the preferred location for a new library/multi-use building

#### 3. Attract visitors to the downtown and riverfront

- Encourage developments that promote and support tourism to locate in close proximity to each other within the area
- Rationalize the road network to make it easier to find High Street
- Improve the visual quality of the back of High Street facing Scott Avenue
- Support the Heritage Society initiative
- Support the relocation of the Logger's Life Provincial Museum to the area
- Incorporate the recommendations of the Intercept Strategy (i.e. signage on highway)
- Prepare way-finding signage within the town to promote and direct people to the area
- Prepare marketing materials to promote the area

#### 4. Create walkable, memorable environments

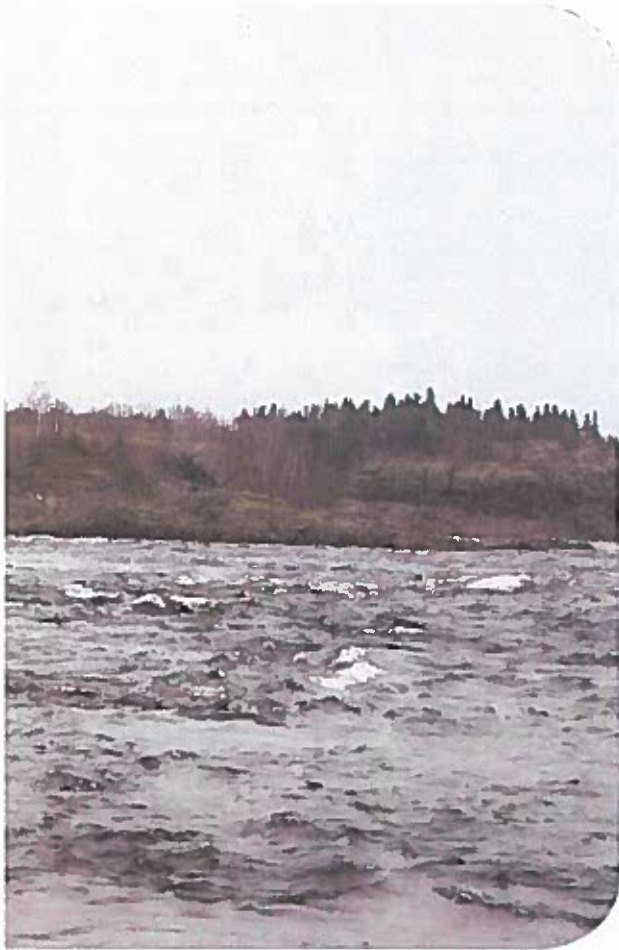
- Provide an enhanced, expanded and continuous trail system along the riverfront
- Connect the riverfront trail system to surrounding trails systems such as the Corduroy Brook Trail via Church Road and Lincoln Road
- Connect destinations along the riverfront
- Provide good pedestrian linkages/spaces to connection High Street to the river
- Implement façade and public realm improvement programs on High Street that respect the character of the town
- Enhance Church Road as an interpretive walking street
- Create space for temporary outdoor markets in the vicinity of High Street
- Create a prominent public gathering space and focal point on High Street





## Vision

“The river is the focal point of a vibrant community life in Grand Falls-Windsor. The waterfront and the downtown are where residents and visitors alike go for shopping, dining, recreating and cultural experiences. It is a place to stroll and browse, to meet friends and enjoy life. There is an element of sophistication to High Street that recaptures past grandeur and a sense of this community’s “pioneer” history. The waterfront is a place to experience the feeling of being on the edge of a vast exciting wilderness that extends into the province’s interior – a place to imagine the exploits of past adventurers, the story of the Beothuk, and to connect with nature and this history.”





### 3.0 Concept

This third section of the report "Concept" explains the conceptual development plan, the early ideas that influenced the plan, the phasing/timing of the plan components and details to help illustrate various aspects of the plan. This section will answer a number of questions: What is the concept and how it will change the area? When will development happen? What might it look like? What are the critical design and policy directions?

In this section you will find:

Section 3.1 – "Early Ideas" explains two of the key early ideas that the overall concept plan is based on: linking the downtown to the river and clustering like uses.

Section 3.2 – "Concept Plan" describes the main ideas of the concept plan in a schematic illustration.

Section 3.3 – "Plan Timing" explains the concept plan as three phases; short term, medium term and long term spanning up to two decades.

Section 3.4 – "Concept Plan Details" illustrates the main design ideas in the plan through many images and drawings.



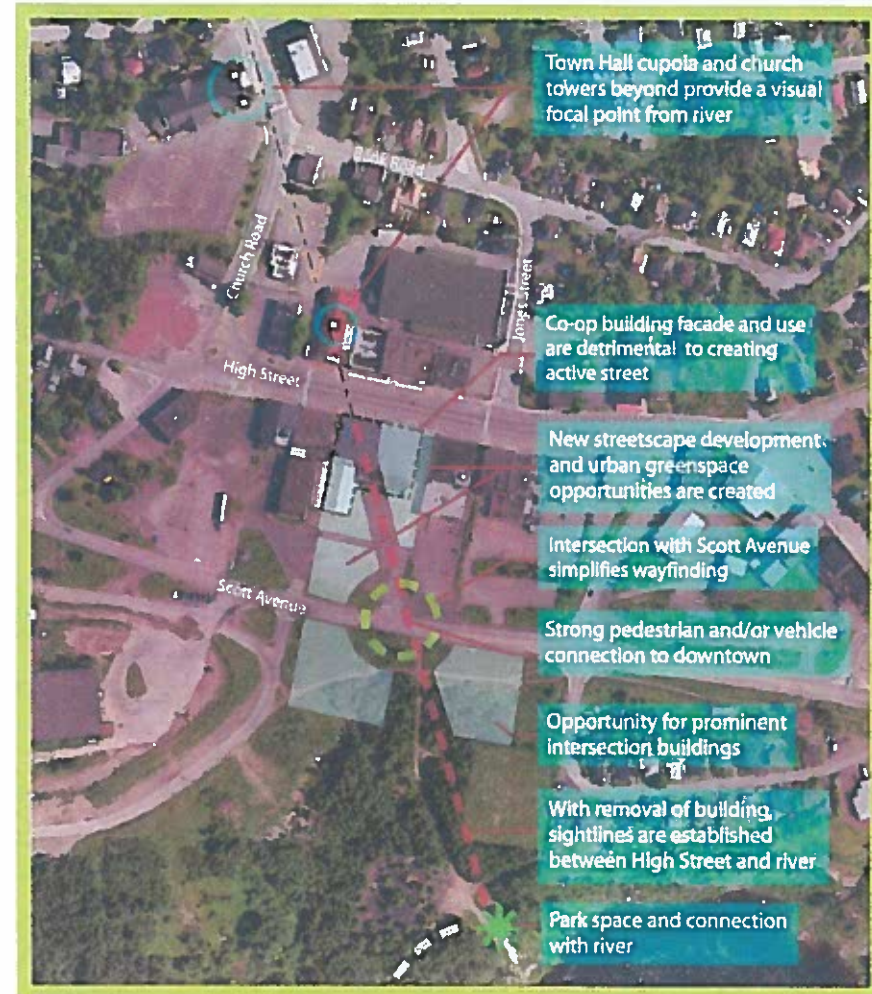
# 3.0 Concept

## 3.0 Concept

### 3.1 EARLY IDEAS

#### 3.1.1 THE CO-OP SITE

Early in the planning process the project team identified the Co-op site as potentially being a strategic site along High Street that could connect the river to High Street both visually and physically. The Co-op site is a large site centrally located and on the south side of High Street containing the former grocery store building and is for sale. As illustrated in Figure ??, the Co-op site was viewed by the project team as being the link between the urban area of High Street and the natural area of the river. The current vacancy of the Co-op building and the corrugated metal façade that lacks windows and interest, is detrimental to creating a vibrant High Street. By removing the existing building and opening up the site, it creates an opportunity for an urban plaza/greenspace and a new streetscape design for a new building. Early on in the planning process, it was identified that the uses for the site should add to the life and vibrancy of High Street such as retail, community focused, a library, a civic use, a business centre or a combination of active uses. A strong pedestrian connection was identified through the site to allow visual and pedestrian access between High Street and the riverfront. Originally conceived on an angle, the axis was suggested in Figure ?? to be oriented to view the Town Hall cupola and the church towers and the river at the other end. A well designed intersection on Scott Avenue would assist with wayfinding for the person on foot and the driver and would create opportunities for prominent buildings at the intersection. This early idea remained in the final plan with slight modifications and focused on a strong civic/multi-use building that enhances street life.



### 3.1.2 SYNERGY OF USES

One of the initial ideas developed based on the cross benefits of following conditions:

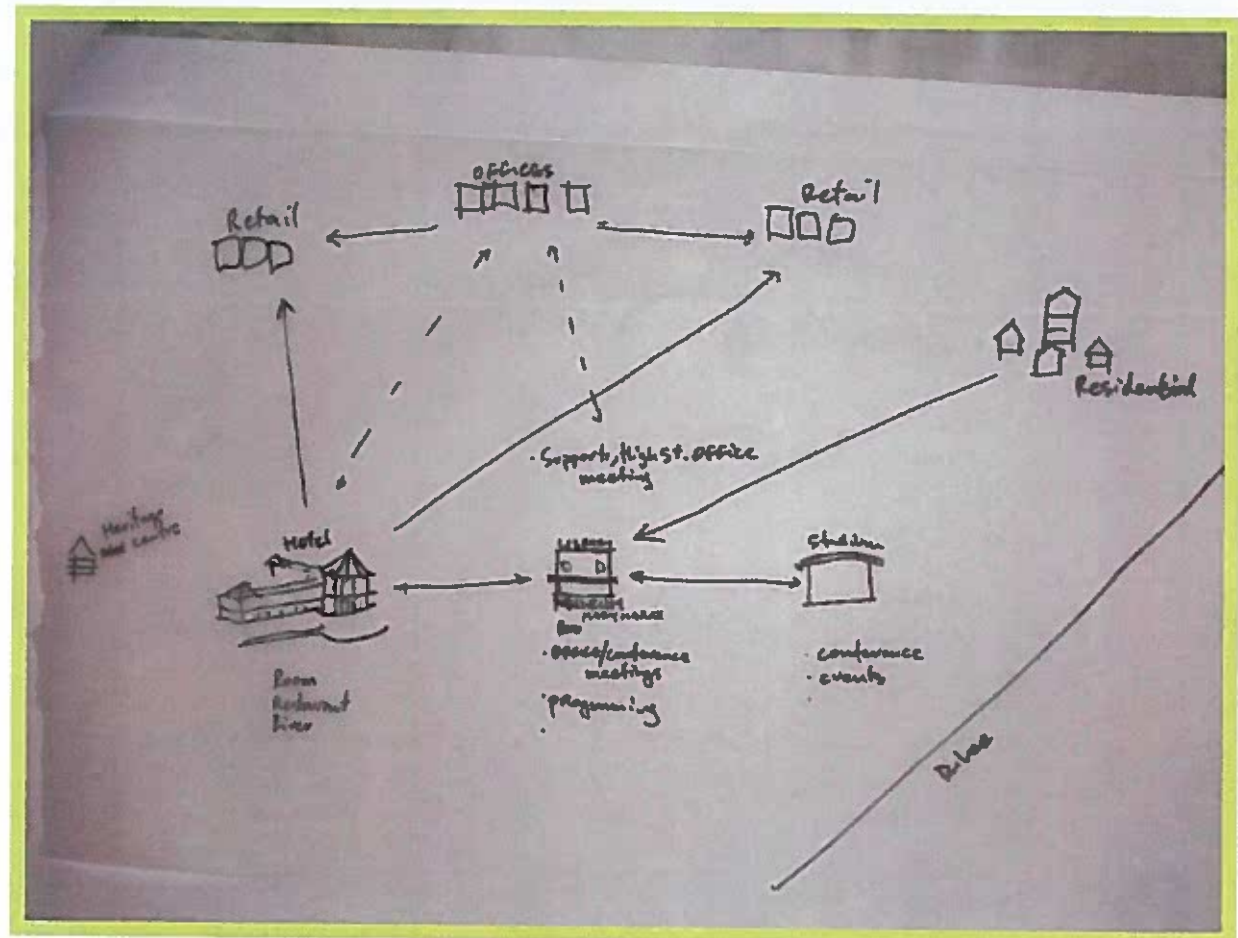
High Street has predominantly office uses

The Town indicated that they cannot attract large conferences to Grand Falls-Windsor due to the lack of facilities and accommodations

The Joe Byrne Memorial Stadium is located on High Street

The Co-op site was for sale

The Sketch describes the synergy of uses in the downtown area and how each land use supports the other. The idea being that the Co-op site redevelops into a civic/multi-use building containing a civic use such as a public library or the relocated Mary March Museum, a retail store or restaurant, and a business centre with meeting rooms and convention space to rent. The business centre with meeting rooms could be used by the library, a conference/convention, or be rented by the offices on High Street. A hotel would be located closer to the river for a dramatic setting and could support conferences/conventions as well as tourists. With all of these functions (multi-use building including a business centre and a library, the stadium, a hotel, strong office sector) within close proximity to one another and each supporting the other use, a synergy is created. These uses would likely generate more retail/restaurant/coffee shop interest in High Street which everyone would benefit from including the local area residents.



## 3.0 Concept

### 3.2 CONCEPT PLAN

Figure ?? illustrates the broad ideas of the overall concept. The schematic concept plan represents the long term development plan over a 20 year period. The components of the concept plan include:

**Riverfront trail** – One of the key elements of the concept plan is the continuous trail system along the Exploits riverfront. This trail system is intended to connect with the existing system that is located east of the sewage treatment facility and with the logging bridge near the mill to the west to continue to the south side of the river. The trail will be located within a wide continuous area of open space along the riverfront ranging in depth from a minimum of 30 metres up to 150 metres. The minimum setback from a river under the Provincial legislation (?? regulation) is 15 meters from a watercourse. The plan proposes a minimum of 30m (existing condition in the vicinity of Valley Road) and up to 150 metres with an average depth of approximately 100 metres. This land shall be permanently open space and protected for open space uses.

**Riverfront parks** – The plan proposes a number of riverfront parks including the expanded and enhanced boat launch area, a large park overlooking the gorge and a park near the Old Valley Road Cemetery near the river's edge. These three key locations have been identified for larger parks, however, smaller parks along the trail system can also be accommodated. The new boat launch area or the 'Riverside Park' will be an expansion of the existing facility to accommodate more boats and become a significant park with a number of activities. The Gorge Park is intended to be a quiet/reflective space overlooking the dramatic view of the gorge where small performances such as Shakespear in the Park could occur. The park near the cemetery is intended to complement the hotel and tourist area and again benefits from great views of the river.

**High Street Public realm improvements** – The plan suggests many visual improvements to High Street. As the Town is responsible for the public road right-of-way, it can make changes to the streetscape including trees, vegetation, sidewalks, street furniture, light fixtures and the round-about ('dummy'). The Town cannot make changes to private property but can encourage the business owners to improve their facades through incentive programs. It is anticipated that once the Town begins to make changes to High Street many of the businesses in the area will want to do the same. New street cross sections were considered including changing the parking configuration to parallel parking to gain more sidewalk space.




**Re-alignment of High Street connection to Scott Avenue** – The project team determined that the awkward connection between High Street and Scott Avenue and the one-way portion of the east end of High Street were detriments to visitors entering downtown from the east along Scott Avenue as High Street is very easy to miss from this approach. As a result, the plan re-aligns this area of High Street and provides a more visible connection to Scott Avenue making it easy for people to access High Street from the east.



## Legend

concept plan schematic map



-  Riverfront Trail
-  Riverfront Park
-  High Street Public realm improvements
-  Re-Align High Street connection to Scott Avenue
-  Church Road Walk & connection to Corduroy Brook Trail
-  Co-op site: Library/Multi-use Building
-  Snowmobile/ATV trail connections
-  Tourist Area: Heritage Society & relocate Logger's Life Museum
-  Hotel
-  Highway Signage
-  Residential areas
-  Relocate Sanger Park
-  Loop Connections across river

**Church Road walk & connection to Corduroy Brook Trail** – Church Road is an attractive area in Grand Falls-Windsor with many original homes, mature trees, red stone walls and numerous churches. In order to connect the riverfront trail system through High Street and to the Corduroy Brook Trail via Lincoln Road, the project team decided the best place to link these two systems is via an interpretive walk along Church Road. This could be done similar to the Grand Concourse in St. John's where many of the trails run along streets and the sidewalks contain wayfinding signs and interpretation panels describing the area and the history.

**Co-op site: Library/Multi-use building** – As described previously, the Co-op site is viewed as a strategic piece of land that will help to connect High Street to the river and assist in bringing weekend and evening activity to High Street. The intent is to have a multi-use building and potentially the public library or other such civic use as its anchor tenant. Although the Public Library Board has not committed to the site and funding is not available, research indicated that a new public library for the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor is needed and the project team determined that a public library would be an excellent use for High Street and one that could bring more people into the area. The multi-use building should have an active and lively street front with retail/restaurant and/or library uses fronting onto the sidewalk and an outside landscaped urban plaza that can be programmed for large and small events. A business centre should be part of the development to provide meeting rooms and convention rental space to support conference and conventions in the area and the local businesses. Other civic/retail/recreational and/or community uses could be part of the development.

**Snowmobile/ATV trail connections** – The snowmobile/ATV trail already exists along the north side of Scott Avenue. The plan recognizes this trail system as an important recreational asset for the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor and recommends maintaining and expanding this trail system to connect to the hotel site and the logger's bridge to cross the river. The snowmobile/ATV trail should be kept separate from the pedestrian trails and walkways for safety reasons and an underpass or safe crossing of Scott Avenue should be developed. The existing trail currently ends as it nears Railway Road and should continue on the southside of Scott Avenue to connect with the existing pathway near Valley Road.

**Tourist area: Heritage Society & relocation Logger's Life Museum** – The plan supports the Heritage Society initiative in developing their new office/tea house in the vicinity of the tourist area as shown in Figure ???. In addition, the Rooms Regional Museums have indicated that the Logger's Life Provincial Museum might be looking for a new location due to highway changes however timing and funding have not yet been discussed. The plan identifies the tourism area near the logger's bridge as a great location for the relocated Logger's Life Provincial Museum which would be an additional asset for the downtown and riverfront areas.

**Hotel** – Although, at the current time and with current hotel room vacancy rates in Grand Falls-Windsor, it does not appear that the market conditions could support a new hotel. The plan has identified a future hotel in the tourist area close to the Heritage Society's proposed new development and the relocated Logger's Life

**Museum.** The hotel should be located within a short walk to High Street and have a great view of the river to give it a desirable and unique setting. It is anticipated that with future market conditions, improvements such as convention and tourist infrastructure in the area, and a truly unique riverfront setting a 4-5 star large hotel or quaint riverside inn could be viable.

**Signage** – With many improvements in the downtown and the riverfront, signage will need to be created to advertise and direct people to the area especially from the highway. Themed wayfinding signage throughout the downtown and riverfront area should also be developed to assist visitors in the area.

**Residential areas** – Residential development within the plan area is important for a number of reasons. Having more people living within a short walk to High Street will provide more demand for services and amenities in the area on a 24/7 basis. In order for High Street to become a vibrant street with many things to do a see it will need more than just occasional visitors. An increase of residents in the area will demand and support more retail and service on High Street adding to its vitality. The housing market is fairly strong in Grand Falls-Windsor and with an aging population, housing that is smaller and more maintenance free will be in demand. Finally, taxes and sales revenue from the residential areas will generate more money for the town to assist in paying for the amenities the town is providing. The residential areas within the plan are identified on lands that will require environmental testing as these lands were once used as a former land fill, an incinerator, and current as a composting area. The viability of residential lands in these locations will need to be determined by later studies. The areas along the riverfront identified for residential development were determined based on the most desirable locations and proximity to other residential development. The residential areas are intended to be in small clusters of medium to high density housing primarily for the aging demographic but also to include a mix of styles, forms, and price point to appeal to a wide cross section of the population.

**Relocation Sanger Memorial RV Park** – As one of the final developments of the plan and occurring at a much later date, is the relocation of Sanger Memorial RV Park to the south side of the river. As residential demand increases along the north side of the riverfront lands, the location of Sanger Park will become less desirable for RV-ers and land values will not be able to support the current \$5,000/year revenue the facility is producing. In an effort not to lose the facility permanently, the plan has accommodated an expanded and enhanced Sanger Memorial RV Park on the south side of the river. The RV Park in this location will require an upgrade to the existing road, public access across the bridge and the provision of services. The RV Park will be a suitable use within the natural setting along the south side of the river with minimal impact to the natural views of the banks.

**Loop trail connections across river** – To complete the trail systems as loops, it is suggested that the future feasibility of connecting the trails across the river and through the mill lands be investigated. Although this is beyond the study area for this plan, input from the public recommended a loop trail connecting to the Salmonid Centre.

## 3.0 Concept

### 3.3 PLAN TIMING

As the plan is anticipated to develop over a period of 20 years or more, it is important to identify the phasing of all the projects within the planning area and what impact each piece will have on the next. As with any plan that stretches into a timeframe beyond 5 years, it becomes more difficult to determine what social, economic, market and policy changes that may impact the plan overtime and certain on the level of detail becomes more difficult to predict.

For the Riverfront and Downtown Development Plan, the plan was divided into short, medium and long term phases and each phase would contain many projects. This was done to identify what pieces of the plan would be undertaken sooner and what parts rely on external factors such as market conditions and private sector interest. The timeframes were estimated as short term: 0-5 years, medium term: 5-15 years and long term: 15-20+ years. The timeframes for the plan are estimates only and represent a sequencing of projects rather than exact years of development. For example, the short term projects will include those that will likely be funded and developed with public sector funds and by the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor. These projects that would primarily be publicly funded include the open space parks along the riverfront and the improvements to the public realm on High Street. It is anticipated that in the medium term timeframe the market conditions will be stronger to support projects such as the hotel and possibly the library/multi-use building. In addition, the improvements to High Street and new attractions along the riverfront are expected to generate private sector confidence in the area and encourage developers to invest in the area. The residential development in the plan will take the longest to build out. The unknown environmental conditions of the land, remediation efforts and the associated costs could render the land undevelopable or delay the residential development until remediation issues are resolved. In addition, the immediate demand for new housing in Grand Falls-Windsor may decline slightly due to the impacts of the mill closing.





## 3.0 Concept



### Short Term

The short term projects would include:

#### Parks & Open Space

- 1) Enhanced boat launch area & new Riverside Park
- 2) Continuous park & trails along the river's edge connecting to existing trail systems
- 3) Gorge Park & lookouts
- 4) Interpretation trails near the cemetery

#### High Street Improvements:

- 5) Enhanced round-about ("dummy")
- 6) Streetscape improvements such as trees, street furniture & plazas
- 7) Façade improvements
- 8) Re-align High Street at Scott Avenue
- 9) Create landscaped parking lots at the rear of High Street
- 10) Purchase the Co-op site

#### Tourism:

- 11) Support the Heritage Society to locate in the tourism area
- 12) Support the Logger's Life Provincial Museum to relocate to the tourism area

#### Residential:

- 13) Conduct environmental studies to determine feasibility of residential lands, relocate the Municipal Depot & prepare the site for residential development

## 3.0 Concept

### Medium Term

- 1) New library/multi-use building on the Co-op site
- 2) Hotel overlooking the river
- 3) New development on High Street to fill in vacant sites
- 4) Residential development begins along the river



3.0 Concept



## 3.0 Concept

### Long Term

- 1) Housing fills in along the river
- 2) Housing along Scott Avenue at the rear of High Street
- 3) Housing on upper levels of buildings along High Street
- 4) Sanger Memorial RV Park is relocated to the south side of the river and expanded and enhanced





## 3.0 Concept

### 3.4 CONCEPT PLAN DETAILS

#### 3.4.1 RIVERFRONT/OPEN SPACE AREA



This image shows the continuous public open space along the river's edge. This long linear open space includes a connected trail system that will link to the logger's bridge near the mill and to the existing trail system west of the sewage lagoon. There will be many opportunities for lookouts and additional trail connections within the area. The key park areas will be the Riverside Park (the enhanced boat launch area), the Gorge Park and the interpretation heritage and tourism area closer to the mill. The open space along the river's edge is shown as approximately 50 acres of land with a varying width between 30 – 150 metres, has many access points from Scott Avenue including park entry signs, places to access or 'get closer to' the river, active and passive park spaces, and opportunities to learn about the river and its history.



These images represent the variety of trail and pathway materials that could occur at various places along the trail system. Wood boardwalks in areas that are wet or closer to the waters edge, granular based trails, seating areas and lookouts with more permanent and structural materials such as stone, metal and concrete.

Town of Grand Falls - Windsor

Re: Riverfront and Downtown Development

<b>Development Priorities</b>	<b>Amount</b>
1. High Street Improvements	\$4,750,000
2. Riverfront Park & Boat Launch	\$1,500,000
3. Gorge Park & Trail Linkages	\$1,600,000
4. High Street Façade Improvements	\$1,100,000
5. Signage & Interpretation (Area Wide)	\$330,000
6. Accommodation Feasibility Assessment	\$25,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$9,305,000</b>
<b>Design &amp; Management Fee (15%)</b>	<b>\$1,395,750</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$10,700,750</b>
<b>Administration Fee (6%)</b>	<b>\$642,045</b>
<b>Grand Total (HST not included)</b>	<b>\$11,342,795</b>

**Grand Falls Windsor- Riverfront & Downtown Development**  
 Order of Magnitude Cost Estimate  
 Date: May 6th, 2009

Project Element: High Street Public Realm Improvements					
Description	Unit	Unit Rate	Quantity	Amount	Notes
<b>Demolition &amp; Removals</b>					
Demolition/Removals- Walks, Curb & Gutter	s.m.	\$25.00	2,450	\$61,250	Full removal- includes disposal
Demolition/Removals- Asphalt Surface	s.m.	\$10.00	15,750	\$157,500	Full width removal- includes realigned sections
Demolition/Removals-Allowance	l.s.	\$15,000.00	1	\$15,000	Allowance for removal of streetlights, site furnishings, signage, etc.
<b>Demolition/Removals- Subtotal</b>				<b>\$233,750</b>	
<b>Demolition/Removals- Contingency</b>				<b>\$58,438</b>	
<b>Demolition/Removals- Total</b>				<b>\$292,188</b>	
<b>Streetscape Improvements</b>					
Rough Grading Allowance	l.s.	\$20,000.00	1	\$20,000	
Fine Grading	s.m.	\$2.55	4,600	\$11,730	For realigned sections
Concrete Curb & Gutter	l.m.	\$65.00	1,625	\$105,625	
Widened Pedestrian Walks (High Street)	s.m.	\$100.00	6,250	\$625,000	
Standard Concrete Walks	s.m.	\$60.00	540	\$32,400	
Asphalt	s.m.	\$33.00	13,300	\$438,900	Assumes full width pave, 2x 38mm lifts, includes Class 'A'
Relocate Existing Catch Basins	ea.	\$4,500.00	32	\$144,000	
Manhole Adjustments	l.s.	\$8,500.00	1	\$8,500	
Upgrade/Repair Deep Utilities		NIC	NIC	\$0	GFW to determine utility upgrade costs, if required.
Decorative Streetlighting	ea.	\$2,500.00	38	\$95,000	
"Pocket" Parks near Arena	ea.	\$10,000.00	2	\$20,000	
Allowance: Detours, Signage, Temp Services	l.s.	\$35,000.00	1	\$35,000	
<b>Streetscape Improvements- Subtotal</b>				<b>\$1,536,155</b>	
<b>Streetscape Improvements- Contingency</b>				<b>\$384,039</b>	
<b>Streetscape Improvements- Total</b>				<b>\$1,920,194</b>	
<b>Site Furnishings &amp; Landscaping</b>					
Street Trees	ea.	\$2,700.00	104	\$280,800	includes concrete well, metal grate & tree
Trees	ea.	\$800.00	26	\$20,800	planted in landscaped area- no conc well/grate
Site Furnishings- Benches	ea.	\$2,000.00	36	\$72,000	includes installation
Site furnishings- Trash Receptacles	ea.	\$750.00	18	\$13,500	
Site Furnishings- Planters	ea.	\$2,400.00	20	\$48,000	decorative concrete planter, includes plantings
Enhanced center of "Dummy"	l.s.	\$36,000.00	1	\$32,000	
<b>Site Furnishings &amp; Landscaping- Subtotal</b>				<b>\$467,100</b>	
<b>Site Furnishings &amp; Landscaping- Contingency</b>				<b>\$116,775</b>	
<b>Site Furnishings &amp; Landscaping- Total</b>				<b>\$583,875</b>	
<b>Integrated Parking Areas</b>					
Removal of Existing Parking Surfaces	s.m.	\$10.00	21,500	\$215,000	Surface mostly asphalt, some gravel
Demolition- 2 existing structures	s.m.	\$50.00	960	\$48,000	
Rough Grading Allowance	l.s.	\$30,000.00	1	\$30,000	Allowance only. Based on +/- 2,000 c.m.
Fine Grading	s.m.	\$2.55	17,500	\$44,625	
Concrete Curb	l.m.	\$60.00	850	\$51,000	
Asphalt	s.m.	\$24.00	17,500	\$420,000	1x 50mm lift, includes 100mm Class 'A'
Storm Water Management/ CBs	l.s.	\$50,000.00	1	\$50,000	
Loam & Seed Future Multi-Family Site	s.m.	\$5.00	8,650	\$43,250	
Trees	e.a.	\$800.00	20	\$16,000	
Allowance: Line Painting, Signage	l.s.	\$10,000.00	1	\$10,000	
<b>Integrated Parking Areas-Subtotal</b>				<b>\$927,875</b>	
<b>Integrated Parking Areas- Contingency</b>				<b>\$231,969</b>	
<b>Integrated Parking Areas- Total</b>				<b>\$1,159,844</b>	
<b>Plaza</b>					
Concrete Surface	s.m.	\$100.00	1,500	\$150,000	Concrete surface- joint patterns TBD.
Fountain	l.s.	\$50,000.00	1	\$50,000	
Benches	ea.	\$2,000.00	10	\$20,000	
Trash receptacles	ea.	\$750.00	5	\$3,750	
Large Planters	ea.	\$5,000.00	3	\$15,000	
Decorative Lighting	ea.	\$2,500.00	6	\$15,000	
Trellis Structure	l.s.	\$20,000.00	1	\$20,000	
<b>Plaza- Subtotal</b>				<b>\$273,750</b>	
<b>Plaza-Contingency</b>				<b>\$68,438</b>	
<b>Plaza- Total</b>				<b>\$342,188</b>	



Project Element: Riverfront Park & Boat Launch					
Description	Unit	Unit Rate	Quantity	Amount	Notes
Clearing & Grubbing	s.m.	\$6.00	4,400	\$26,400	
Rough Grading Allowance	l.s.	\$25,000.00	1	\$25,000	Allowance based on 1,800 c.m. Class 'B'
Fine Grading	s.m.	\$2.55	5,000	\$12,750	
Concrete Curb & Gutter	l.m.	\$65.00	860	\$55,900	
Concrete Walk	s.m.	\$60.00	900	\$54,000	
Asphalt- Entry Road	s.m.	\$33.00	3,400	\$112,200	
Asphalt- Parking Area	s.m.	\$24.00	1,600	\$38,400	
Construction Allowance	l.s.	\$20,000.00	1	\$20,000	silt fencing, line painting, etc.
Entry & Directional Signage	l.s.	\$17,500.00	1	\$17,500	
Pavilion	l.s.	\$50,000.00	1	\$50,000	Allowance
Natural Seating Area	l.s.	\$150,000.00	1	\$150,000	Allowance
Concession Building	s.m.	\$1,200.00	60	\$72,000	
Boat Launch	ea.	\$50,000.00	2	\$100,000	
Pier Walk/ Boat Docking	ea.	\$12,000.00	35	\$420,000	Based on \$12,000 per boat.
Trail Connections	s.m.	\$50.00	425	\$21,250	
Trees	ea.	\$800.00	60	\$48,000	
Landscaping Allowance	l.s.	\$60,000.00	1	\$60,000	
<b>Riverfront Park &amp; Boat Launch- Subtotal</b>				<b>\$1,283,400</b>	
<b>Riverfront Park &amp; Boat Launch- Contingency</b>				<b>\$320,850</b>	
<b>Riverfront Park &amp; Boat Launch- Subtotal</b>				<b>\$1,604,250</b>	

Project Element: Gorge Park & Trail Linkages					
Description	Unit	Unit Rate	Quantity	Amount	Notes
<b>Gorge Park</b>					
Clearing & Grubbing	s.m.	\$6.00	4,800	\$28,800	
Rough Grading Allowance	l.s.	\$30,000.00	1	\$30,000	Allowance based on 2500 cm of Class 'B'
Fine Grading	s.m.	\$2.55	2,600	\$6,630	
Concrete Curb & Gutter	l.m.	\$65.00	320	\$20,800	
Concrete Walk	s.m.	\$60.00	175	\$10,500	
Asphalt- Road	s.m.	\$33.00	1,100	\$36,300	
Asphalt- Parking	s.m.	\$24.00	1,500	\$36,000	
Construction Allowance	l.s.	\$10,000.00	1	\$10,000	Silt fence, line painting
Entry Signage	l.s.	\$12,000.00	1	\$12,000	
Red Stone Walls	l.s.	\$230,000.00	1	\$230,000	Allowance.
Look-Offs	ea.	\$25,000.00	6	\$150,000	
Main Look-Off	l.s.	\$140,000.00	1	\$140,000	
Performance Area + Structure	l.s.	\$150,000.00	1	\$150,000	
Trails	s.m.	\$50.00	375	\$18,750	
Trees	ea.	\$800.00	70	\$56,000	
Landscape Allowance	l.s.	\$65,000.00	1	\$65,000	
<b>Gorge Park- Subtotal</b>				<b>\$1,000,780</b>	
<b>Gorge Park- Contingency</b>				<b>\$250,195</b>	
<b>Gorge Park- Total</b>				<b>\$1,250,975</b>	
<b>Trail Linkages</b>					
Trails	s.m.	\$50.00	7,550	\$377,500	
<b>Trail Linkages- Subtotal</b>				<b>\$377,500</b>	
<b>Trail Linkages- Contingency</b>				<b>\$94,375</b>	
<b>Trail Linkages- Total</b>				<b>\$471,875</b>	

**Table \_  
Construction Jobs by Project Element by Year and Job Type**

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>
<b>High Street Public Realm Improvements</b>			
# of Months Work	8	8	
Jobs:			
Prof./Supervision	7	7	
Skilled jobs	14	14	
Unskilled	14	14	
Total	35	35	
<b>Riverfront Park and Boat Launch</b>			
# of Months Work	8		
Jobs:			
Prof./Supervision	5		
Skilled jobs	11		
Unskilled	11		
Total	27		
<b>Gorge Park and Trail Linkages</b>			
# of Months Work	6		
Jobs:			
Prof./Supervision	8		
Skilled jobs	15		
Unskilled	15		
Total	38		
<b>Facade Improvement Program</b>			
# of Months Work		6	6
Jobs:			
Prof./Supervision		3	3
Skilled jobs		5	5
Unskilled		4	4
Total		12	12
<b>Interpretive Signage</b>			
# of Months Work		6	
Jobs:			
Prof./Supervision		2	
Skilled jobs		4	
Unskilled		4	
Total		10	
<b>Total All Projects</b>			
# of Months Work	22	14	6
Jobs:			
Prof./Supervision	20	12	3
Skilled jobs	40	23	5
Unskilled	40	22	4
Total	100	57	12



# GORGE PARK DEVELOPMENT:

**Design Development and Construction  
Detailing**

## ABSTRACT

The Town wishes to complete the next phase of the Gorge Park redevelopment by designing and developing significant “demand generator” infrastructure that will support enhanced visitor experiences to the Town and the entire region. The Town will create a “must see” for anyone visiting the Region, that will have tremendous appeal to visitors traveling in and though Central Newfoundland

Town of Grand Falls-Windsor



## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
1. Background .....	3
1.1. Town of Grand Falls-Windsor .....	3
1.2. Tourism Development in Grand Falls-Windsor and Central Region .....	4
2. Proposal .....	6
2.1. Concept .....	6
2.2. Gorge Park Development – Master Plan .....	7
2.3. Project - Design Development and Construction Detailing .....	10
2.4. Project Work Plan .....	10
2.5. Project Schedule .....	11
2.6. Project Budget and Financing .....	12
2.7. Project Management .....	13
2.8. Project Economic Impact .....	13
3. Benefits to Regional Tourism .....	14
Attachment 1: TOURISM DESTINATION VISITOR APPEAL ASSESSMENT: CENTRAL REGION .....	16

## Executive Summary

The Town of Grand Falls Windsor 10 Year Development Plan (Tract, 2007) identified the redevelopment of High Street and the Exploits River Gorge as key visitor assets for the Town. The first phase of the Plan resulted in the successful redevelopment of High Street and the development of a Boat Launch, as a first step in the development of the larger Gorge Park project. Currently the Park is focused on supporting visitor access to the waters edge, the development of a small boat launch and docking to support salmon fishing and recreational boating on the Exploits. The Park has become destination for everyone from out of province visitors, to salmon fishers, to wedding parties.

The Town now wishes to complete the next phase of the Gorge Park redevelopment by designing and developing significant “demand generator” infrastructure that will support enhanced visitor experiences to the Town and the entire region. The Town is creating a “must see” for anyone visiting the Region, that will have tremendous appeal to visitors traveling in and through Central Newfoundland.

The overall capital development cost for the Gorge Park, that includes the suspension bridge is \$5M dollars (\$3M for the Park and \$2M for the suspension bridge). These investments do not include the Zipline that is being developed by a private individual.

Phase 1 of the Gorge Park Development is to undertake Design Development and Construction Detailing. This work will include preparation of detailed design drawing and costing and development of a construction plan and documentation.

Design Development and Construction Detailing will cost approximately \$500,000:

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| • Suspension Bridge Design                                       | \$200,000 |
| • Engineering Design (civil/architectural/mechanical/electrical) | \$100,000 |
| • Landscape Design   | \$200,000 |

The Town proposes that the cost of the project be shared between the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (65%), Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (25%) and the Town (10%).

The Town will engage, through a public Request for Proposals process, a qualified engineering design firm to undertake the Design Development and Construction Detailing for the Gorge Park Development.

If funding is approved in October 2017 then it is anticipated that a Request for Proposals would be released in November. The contract would then be awarded in December with completion expected by May 2018.

# 1. Background

## 1.1. Town of Grand Falls-Windsor

The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor is located in central Newfoundland and Labrador 426 km west of the City of St. John's and 272 km east of the City of Corner Brook along the province's largest river, the Exploits River.

Grand Falls-Windsor currently has a population of approximately 14,000 people. The town acts as the central service area for the south coast of Newfoundland (Fortune Bay & Bay D'Espoir areas) and the surrounding population including the towns of Badger and Bishop's Falls. The town has the third largest health care centre in the province and being centrally located in the region it is the home of five major transportation companies. People are employed in a variety of industries including health care, natural resources (forestry, aquaculture and mining), information technology as well as transport/transportation. The Gander International Airport is located about a one-hour drive east of Grand-Falls Windsor in the town of Gander.

The history of The Town of Grand Falls-Windsor is unique compared to the traditional coastal development that occurred in Newfoundland. The development of the railway opened up the interior of the island and began to attract interest in the natural resources in the interior. With the threat of war in Europe in the early 1900's newspaper barons of the daily mail in Britain looked to central Newfoundland for a secure source of newsprint. Brothers Alfred and Harold Harmsworth (Lord Northcliffe and Lord Rothermere) decided on the site at the grand falls along the Exploits River for their new pulp and paper mill. Lord Northcliffe was very interested in the town planning practices of Ebenezer Howard, who in the late 1800s blended the best of the city amenities with the best of the countryside in what we now consider our modern 'suburbs'. Lord Northcliffe commissioned a company out of St. John's to draw up a town plan for Grand Falls based on Howard's 'garden enterprise, and in 1905 construction began through his new the Anglo Newfoundland Development Company (A.N.D. Co.).

The original townsite consisted of the mill, a town centre focused on High Street, two residential districts and a recreational area. The houses were arranged on large lots with front and rear 'gardens' based on Howard's model, the rows of lots would have been very unusual compared to traditional settlement patterns. The construction program for the Town lasted for about 6 years and a total of 485 houses and 50 other buildings were constructed including a hospital, schoolhouses and churches.

As only mill employees could be leaseholders in Grand Falls. The Town of Grand Falls Station (Windsor) grew up north of the train station and it quickly became a bustling economic centre. As both towns grew, Grand Falls Station was incorporated as a town in 1938 as the Town of Windsor. Grand Falls was a 'closed' company town' until 1961 when Abitibi-Price took ownership of the Mill and gave control of the town lands to its citizens.

The two towns amalgamated in 1991 forming the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor.

## 1.2. Tourism Development in Grand Falls-Windsor and Central Region

The closure of the Abitibi Bowater Pulp and Paper mill was a major blow to the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor. Not only was the mill the largest employer in the region but it was the reason for the existence of the Town and provided the context for how residents and businesses defined themselves.

Since the closure, the Town has defied the forecasts of economic and social decay. Led by its Council, the Town has further consolidated its position as the service centre for the central-west and south coast region. It has aggressively pursued opportunities to bring new businesses to the Town including those who would utilize the now under-utilized forest resources.

Grand Falls-Windsor has a number of tourist destinations and is centrally located for access to attractions in central Newfoundland. The town annually hosts the Salmon Festival, a five-day regional celebration focused on music, food and migrating salmon that has been running for over 30 years. Tourists are attracted to the Mary March Provincial Museum which highlights the life of the Beothuk, the now extinct aboriginal people of Newfoundland. The Salmonid Interpretation Centre attracted 18,401 visitors in 2017, an increase of over 1200 from the previous year. Its many interests include a salmon ladder, underwater viewing areas, aquariums and displays on the biology, ecology and life cycles of freshwater fish. Sanger Memorial RV Park recorded a total 3,186 visitor nights in 2017.

The Town has identified the tourism sector has having significant potential to provide economic growth to the Town. It proactively commissioned a 10 Year Development Plan (Tract, 2007) which identified the redevelopment of High Street and the Exploits River Gorge as key visitor assets for the Town. The first phase of the Plan resulted in the successful redevelopment of High Street and the development of a Boat Launch, as a first step in the development of the larger Gorge Park project. Currently the Park is focused on supporting visitor access to the waters edge, the development of a small boat launch and docking to support salmon fishing and recreational boating on the Exploits. The Park has become destination for everyone from out of province visitors, to salmon fishers, to wedding parties.

An emerging tourism venture located at the Park is river rafting. In 2017, trips were run daily at 10, 2 and 6:30pm with clients meeting in the upper parking lot at Gorge Park. From there they were bused along a scenic route to the Salmon Center road. Rafting occurred from the mill back to the boat launch at the Park.

The Town's strategy for tourism development was confirmed and given impetus by the Central Region's Tourism Destination Visitor Appeal 2015 report "Strengthening the Potential". The study concluded that the fundamental challenge to tourism growth in the region was ***"Core to strengthening the success of the Central region are the collaborative efforts needed between businesses and communities to lure travellers off the Trans-Canada Highway between St. John's and Gros Morne. Whether they are outdoor enthusiasts, people seeking art, music, culture, or a touch of rural Newfoundland, ensuring there are consistent services and experiences throughout the region that meet the needs and expectations of resident and non-resident travellers is critical for the success of seasonal and year-round businesses."***

Towards meeting this challenge, the study completed an in-depth analysis of the status of the tourism sector in the region and its potential for growth all of which resulted in identifying sixteen key findings (Attachment 1). Much of the recommended action relates to directing tourists towards the coastal communities. However, the analysis and findings of the report also provides the basis for development

of the Exploits River Gorge as a core tourism assets and demand generator that contribute to a positive visitor experience and motivate travelers to visit the Town of Grand Falls-Windsor.



## 2. Proposal

### 2.1. Concept

The Town wishes to complete the next phase of the Gorge Park redevelopment by designing and developing significant “demand generator” infrastructure that will support enhanced visitor experiences to the Town and the entire region. The Town will create a “must see” for anyone visiting the Region, that will have tremendous appeal to visitors traveling in and though Central Newfoundland.

The Gorge Park development will include two central visitor appeal attractions:

- A 660ft (200m) suspension bridge that spans the Gorge, the most dramatic and accessible landscapes found along the entire length of the Exploits River.
- An associated Zip Line, being developed privately, that will be integrated with the bridge.



## 2.2. Gorge Park Development – Master Plan

The Gorge Park Development Master Plan is shown visually in the following schematic.



Key elements of the development include:

1. Suspension Bridge - 660ft (200m) suspension bridge spanning the Exploits River Gorge with:
  - Boardwalk Entrance/Lookout Area
  - Site Furniture
  - Signage and Interpretation
  - Landscaping
  - Site Access

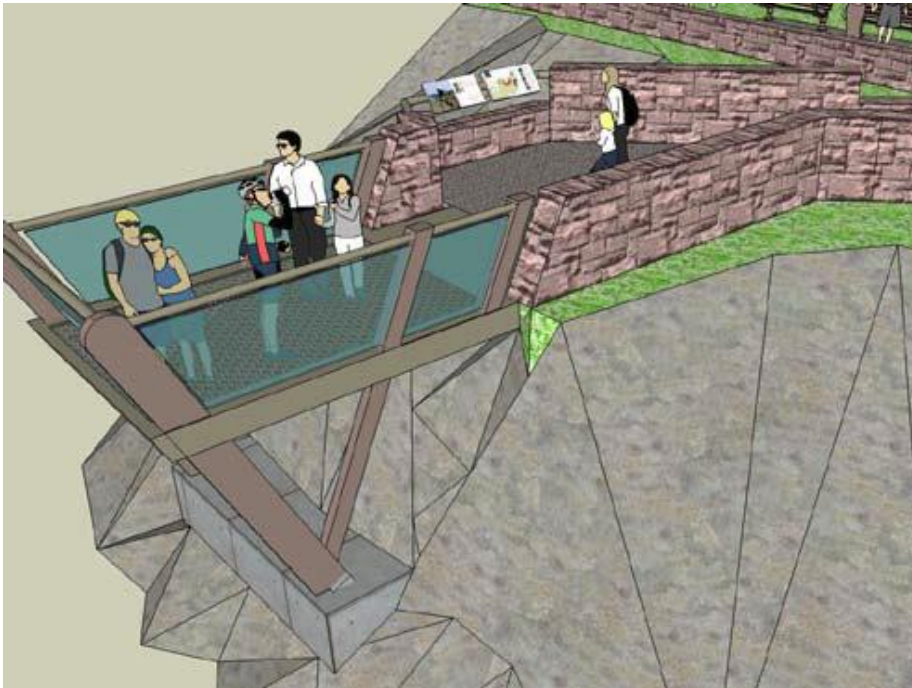
## 2. Trail Upgrading including:

- Granular Resurfacing
- Foot Bridge Upgrading/Replacing
- Stair Upgrading/Replacing
- New Trail Development
- Small Trail Lookouts
- Trail Furniture
- Interpretation and Signage
- Seeding Reinstatement
- 3.0m ATV Trail
- 2.0m Walking Trail



## 3. Gorge Park Lookout

- Asphalt Parking and Roads
- Park Signage
- Fencing
- Welcome Court
- Granular Trails
- Upgrade Existing Lookout
- Site Furniture
- Landscaping



## 4. Other Buildings/Structure

- Amphitheatre
- Pavilion/Trellis
- Park Building
- Adventure Playground

The overall capital development cost for the Gorge Park, that includes the suspension bridge is \$5M dollars (\$3M for the Park and \$2M for the suspension bridge). It is anticipated that this work would be undertaken over a number of years as determined once the design is completed.

These investments do not include the Zip Line that is being developed by a private individual.

Description	Total	Notes
<b>General Conditions</b>		
1 Environmental Requirements	\$ 35,000.00	does not include work by others i.e.. Zip line and Suspension Bridge
2 Temporary Construction Facilities	\$ 35,000.00	
3 Mobilization / Demobilization	\$ 85,000.00	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$ 155,000.00</b>	
<b>Trail Upgrading</b>		
4 Granular Resurfacing	\$ 13,000.00	
5 Foot Bridge Upgrading/Replacing	\$ 52,000.00	
6 Stair Upgrading/Replacing	\$ 32,500.00	
7 New Trail Development	\$ 39,000.00	
8 Small Trail Lookouts	\$ 32,500.00	
9 Trail Furniture	\$ 71,500.00	
10 Interpretation and signage	\$ 26,000.00	
11 Seeding Reinstatement	\$ 41,600.00	
12 3.0m ATV Trail	\$ 26,000.00	ATV Trail upgrading at Gorge Park
13 2.0m Walking Trail	\$ 19,500.00	Pedestrian ATV by-pass link at Gorge Park
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$ 353,600.00</b>	
<b>Suspension Bridge and Lookout Area</b>		
14 Suspension Bridge	\$ 2,000,000.00	by others, quote based on Dec. 2016 Concept Plan
15 Boardwalk Entrance/Lookout Area	\$ 135,000.00	
16 Site Furniture	\$ 26,000.00	
17 Signage and Interpretation	\$ 13,000.00	
18 Planting, Sodding & Reinstatement	\$ 10,400.00	
19 Site Access	\$ 6,500.00	3.0m wide trail for site access
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,190,900.00</b>	
<b>Gorge Park (Lookout)</b>		
21 Demolition	\$ 15,600.00	
22 Asphalt Parking and Roads	\$ 260,000.00	
23 Curbs	\$ 87,100.00	
24 Civil Works	\$ 104,000.00	
25 Granular Materials Yard	\$ 65,000.00	Leveling and Resurfacing
26 Compost Yard Gates	\$ 19,500.00	
27 Park Signage	\$ 26,000.00	
28 Fencing	\$ 71,500.00	8' Wood Fence Around Depot Yard
29 Welcome Court	\$ 39,000.00	
30 Zip Line Terminal	\$ -	by others
31 Granular Trails	\$ 41,600.00	
32 Upgrade Existing Lookout	\$ 71,500.00	
33 Amphitheater Seating	\$ 26,000.00	
34 Pavilion/Trellis	\$ 78,000.00	
35 Park Building	\$ 227,500.00	
36 Adventure Playground	\$ 390,000.00	
37 Site Furniture	\$ 26,000.00	
38 Landscape Berms	\$ 39,000.00	
39 Planting, Sodding & Reinstatement	\$ 208,000.00	
40 Lighting & Electrical in Park	\$ 260,000.00	
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,055,300.00</b>	
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,754,800.00</b>	
<b>Design and Engineering Fees</b>	<b>\$ 306,404.20</b>	does not include work by others i.e. Zip line
<b>Suspension Bridge Design Fees</b>	<b>\$ 200,000.00</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 5,261,204.20</b>	

2.3. Project - Design Development and Construction Detailing

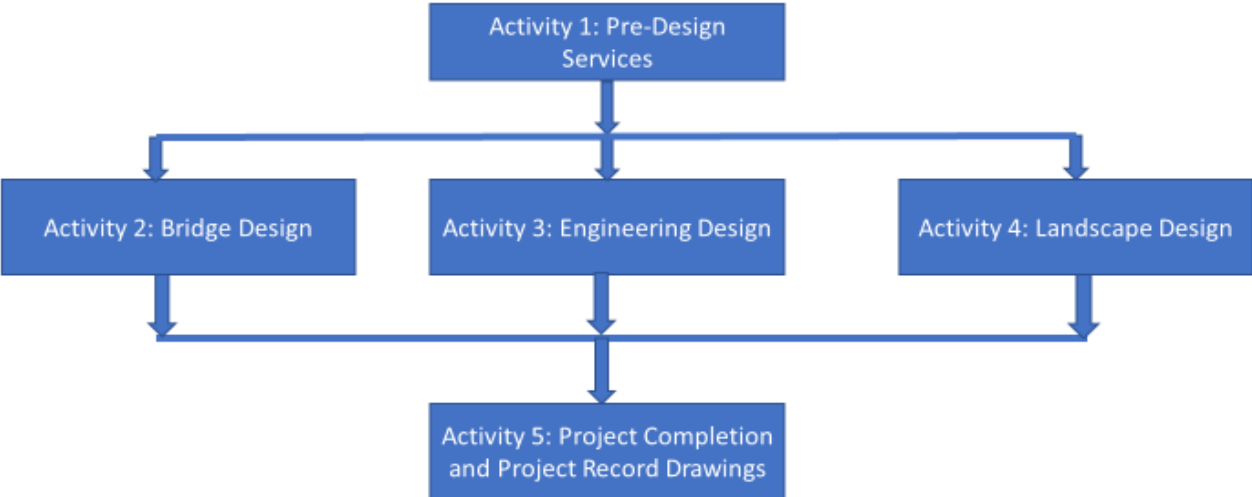
Phase 1 of the Gorge Park Development is to undertake Design Development and Construction Detailing. This work will include preparation of detailed design drawing and costing and development of a construction plan and documentation.

2.4. Project Work Plan

The Town will engage, through a public Request for Proposals process, a qualified design firm to undertake the Design Development and Construction Detailing for the Gorge Park Development.

The following flow chart outlines the anticipated Work Plan which the Town has developed to guide the design process.

Project Flow Chart



**Activity 1: Pre-Design Services**

The initial Phase of the work, as outlined in the Project Flow Chart, will allow the Consultant to activate its communication processes with the Town, to fully understand the project, to review the preliminary concepts/designs for the major elements of the projects, to have a preliminary review of the budget and make any necessary refinements/updates to documentation.

**Activity 2: Design Development and Contract Detailing – Suspension Bridge**

- Provide Suspension Bridge design services.
- Submit the design packages to authorities having jurisdiction and obtain their approval through permits and licences where required.
- Complete contract documents and submit a pre-tender package for review and approval by the Town and other relevant authorities.

- Provide Suspension Bridge costing for design development and update for pre-tender stages.

Deliverable: Suspension Bridge Design Development and Pre-Tender Contract Documents

### **Activity 3: Design Development and Contract Detailing – Engineering**

- Provide architectural, civil and structural, mechanical and electrical design services.
- Submit the design packages to authorities having jurisdiction and obtain their approval through permits and licences where required.
- Complete contract documents and submit a pre-tender package for review and approval by the Town and other relevant authorities.
- Provide architectural, civil, mechanical, electrical, and structural costing for design development and update for pre-tender stages.

Deliverable: Design Development and Pre-Tender Contract Documents

### **Activity 4: Design Development and Contract Detailing – Landscape**

- Provide Landscape design services.
- Submit the design packages to authorities having jurisdiction and obtain their approval through permits and licences where required.
- Complete contract documents and submit a pre-tender package for review and approval by the Town and other relevant authorities.
- Provide Landscape costing for design development and update for pre-tender stages.

Deliverable: Design Development and Pre-Tender Contract Documents

### **Phase 5: Project Completion and Project Record Drawings**

- Provide all drawings and costing in hard copy and Auto Cad digital format to the Town.

Deliverable: Completed Project

## 2.5. Project Schedule

If funding is approved in October 2017 then it is anticipated that a Request for Proposals would be released in November. The contract would then be awarded in December with completion expected by May 2018.

## Schedule -Phase 1: Gorge Park Development

	2016-17								
	Oct. - Dec. 2017			Jan. - Mar. 2018			April - June 2018		
<b>Activities</b>									
(1) Request for Proposals									
(2) Award Contract									
(3) Project Initiation									
(4) Design Development and Construction Detailing									
(5) Complete Project									

### 2.6. Project Budget and Financing

Design Development and Construction Detailing will cost approximately \$500,000:

- Suspension Bridge Design \$200,000
- Engineering Design (civil/architectural/mechanical/electrical) \$100,000
- Landscape Design \$200,000

The costs will be for a fixed price engineering consulting contract which will include all professional fees and expenses.

The Town proposes that the cost of the project be shared between the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (65%), Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (25%) and the Town (10%).

Activities	ACOA	Gov of NL	Town	Total
Engineering Consulting	\$325,000	\$125,000	\$50,000	\$500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$325,000</b>	<b>\$125,000</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>	<b>\$500,000</b>

## 2.7. Project Management

The Town will establish a Project Management Committee comprised of senior management and professional personnel to oversee the Design Development and Construction Detailing for the Gorge Park Development.

### **Project Manager**

Jeff Saunders    Town Manager

*As Town Manager, Jeff is responsible for all Town operations reporting to the Mayor and Council.*

### **Project Team**

Nelson Chatman            Director of Engineering and Works

*Nelson is a professional engineer and is responsible for Town infrastructure and construction.*

Gary Hennessey            Economic Development Officer

*As Economic Development Officer, Gary uses all available resources to foster, develop and support business growth directly within Grand Falls-Windsor*

The Project Management Committee will report to Mayor Barry Manual and elected members of Council.

## 2.8. Project Economic Impact

The primary economic impact of the Design Development and Construction Detailing will occur if it results in the eventual development of the next phase of the Gorge Park.

Anticipated impacts would be as follows:

- The development of the Gorge Park will provide direct job opportunities in construction as well as spin-off benefits for local businesses.
- The major economic impact of the Gorge Park Development would be its impact on the Tourism sector in Grand Falls-Windsor. There would be direct impact related to increased visitors to the Town specifically to see and experience the attractions envisaged for Gorge Park. Perhaps more importantly, the further development of Gorge Park will be the catalyst for development of new tourism based enterprises such as the emerging river rafting venture and the proposed zip line venture.
- There would be spin-off benefits for local businesses and service industries such as restaurants and stores from increased tourist visits.
- The Gorge Park Development will also have a major impact on overall development of the tourism sector in the Central Region. This issue is addressed in detail in the next section.



### 3. Benefits to Regional Tourism

The recently completed **Tourism Appeal Visitor Appeal Assessment: Central Region, 2015** identified varied challenges the Central Region is facing that need to be addressed. The proposed redevelopment of the Gorge Park responds to many of the challenges and opportunities identified.

The following are numbered comments from the report, followed by a description of how the Gorge Park developments meets these challenges:

- 1. Long-term strategic, sustainable growth in the Central region requires strengthening inter-community collaboration, enhancing customer service, and developing new products and experiences that are aligned with the Newfoundland and Labrador brand.*

Gorge Park: The redevelopment is part of a 10- year redevelopment plan that focuses on community economic growth and uses tourism as a key economic generator. The Town has been investing in the strategy for the last several years. The development provide access to varies commercial enterprises on High Street, supports local business investment and is adding significant soft Adventure Central experiences, with the suspension bridge and associated Zipline as key visitor lures.

- 2. Significant infrastructure investments in the Central region are foundational to the long-term growth, competitive appeal, and visitor experience. There are very few man-made assets in the Central region and of those that exist, they cater primarily to the local market and would not be considered a major tourism draw. Activity-Based Tourism Businesses are a core asset to the region providing a wide range of experiences to choose from year-round. These businesses facilitate the ‘WHY’ of travel in creating ways to experience the destination that connect visitors to the locals. Continually refreshing the product offered and encouraging more diversified experiences could help differentiate the region and enhance the revenue opportunities; there has been significant investment in infrastructure, but attaching a program/experience element to these spaces to generate new revenue streams is lacking.*

Gorge Park: At a projected development cost of \$5M the proposed developments are the significant investment in signature visitor experiences the Central Region lacks. The Park and it varied associated amenities and other nearby attractions create a core cluster of assets that visitors seek. The opportunity to generate revenue is significant and the Suspension Bridge in combination with the Zipline, in combination with the salmon fishing, the river boating, the climbing, the riverside mountain biking, certainly provide this part of Central Region with the shot in the “visitor experience arm” that is currently lacking.

- 3. Trails are an integral part of the Central region visitor experience; identifying solutions to generate revenue and broaden the visitor experience will contribute to their long-term sustainability. In the Grand Falls – Windsor area, work is being done on a new project to develop an extensive mountain bike area associated with the cross-country ski club and*

*a resort. As well, annual mountain bike events already occur in the region in Grand Falls-Windsor area and there is the potential to grow this niche market.*

Gorge Park: The riverside bicycle trail system being developed by the Town runs along the Exploit's River and is physically connected to the Gorge Park. Bikers will be able to take their bike across the river to bike the south side of the Exploits with a future connection to the Salmonid Interpretation Centre and the interior of the Island, via an extensive system of old logging roads. Varied opportunities to generate revenue are built into the experience from bicycle rentals, to trying the Zipline, to visiting the Salmonid Centre to art, food and crafts on High Street. The linked cross-country ski trails provide year-round visitor opportunities.

The opportunity also exists for ATV tours to the backcountry, or to follow the railway spur-line that links Grand Falls Windsor to Bishops Falls to Peterview to Botwood: creating a linked recreation corridor and an overnight visitor experience.

*4. Ensuring trail development activities address the importance of having appropriate signage (trail heads, to interpretation), washrooms, information on aspects such as weather and wildlife, along with maps will be important.*

Gorge Park: Some years ago the Town created a new brand, Grand Falls Windsor "perfectly centred". The brand imagery is highlighted in the Town's integrated signage system that directs visitors to key assets and services. The Town is the first NL community to install such a system. The Town has the ability to expand this system to integrate the Gorge Park.

### 3.1. Attachment 1: TOURISM DESTINATION VISITOR APPEAL ASSESSMENT: CENTRAL REGION

Submitted by: Tourism Café Canada & Brain Trust Marketing & Communications (Dec 2015)

#### **KEY FINDINGS**

**Finding #1:** Long-term strategic, sustainable growth in the Central region requires strengthening inter-community collaboration, enhancing customer service, and developing new products and experiences that are aligned with the Newfoundland and Labrador brand.

**Finding #2:** Bed and Breakfasts, Cottages and Inns offer high quality accommodations with hosts providing authentic, emotional connections to visitors who want to get off the beaten track and explore rural Newfoundland.

**Finding #3:** A celebration of coastal communities by land and sea represents an opportunity for targeted marine and land-based visitor experiences to be aligned and marketed.

**Finding #4:** The Central region has tourism products that offer targeted year-round visitor opportunities.

**Finding #5:** Significant infrastructure investments in the Central region are foundational to the long-term growth, competitive appeal, and visitor experience.

**Finding #6:** There is an opportunity to raise the bar on the culinary experience through specific menu adaptations.

**Finding #7:** Trails are an integral part of the Central region visitor experience; identifying solutions to generate revenue and broaden the visitor experience will contribute to their long-term sustainability.

**Finding #8:** A more concerted effort should be made to create group and independent travel packages to sell through the various distribution channels.

**Finding #9:** Learning from the Shorefast Foundation's Community Host Program and embracing the principles of practice in other communities represents an opportunity to build on a successful business model in the region.

**Finding #10:** Communities and tourism stakeholders need to ensure responsive visitor services exist throughout the region.

**Finding #11:** The number of existing unique galleries could raise the bar on the visitor experience by adding a program dimension to their current retail offer.

**Finding #12:** Tourism businesses and municipalities are not fully optimizing their online presence; targeted training represents an opportunity for increased visitation and revenue.

**Finding #13:** Select outfitting lodges could attract new business by diversifying beyond their traditional product offer and target markets.

**Finding #14:** Collective efforts in addressing the emerging opportunities and challenges with the Tourism Assurance Plan (TAP) should be a short-term priority.

**Finding #15:** TDMS and e-dining databases have limitations, which are being addressed; continued effort will benefit visitors, operators, and the province and contribute to achieving the goals outlined in *Vision 2020*.

**Finding #16:** Amend five *Vision 2020* goals to optimize the investment focus needed to achieve the desired outcomes.