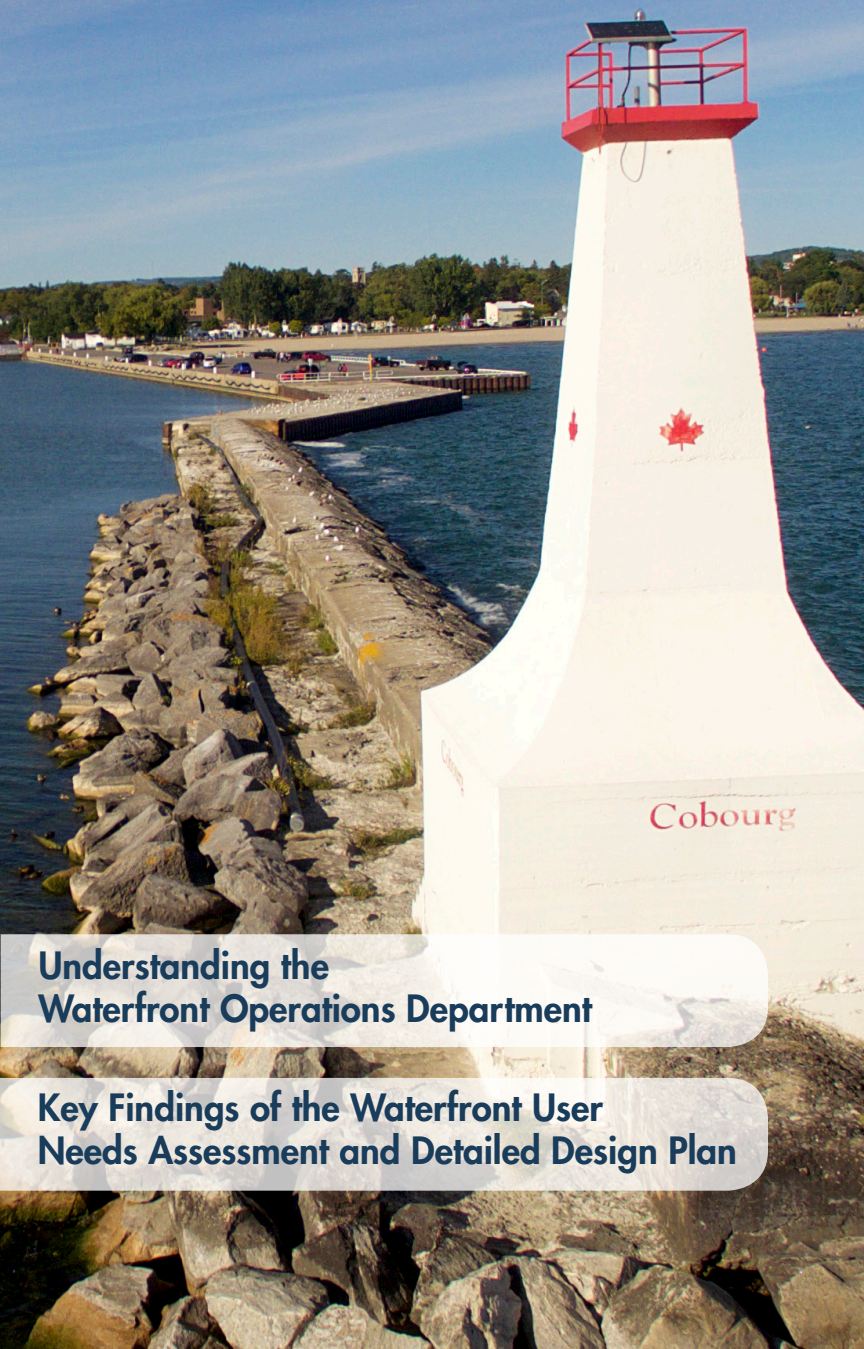


TOWN OF COBOURG  
RECREATION AND CULTURE DIVISION



# COBOURG WATERFRONT



**Understanding the  
Waterfront Operations Department**

**Key Findings of the Waterfront User  
Needs Assessment and Detailed Design Plan**





A message from Mayor Brocanier

# THANK YOU

In 2017, the Town worked closely with the consulting firm *thinc design* to carry out the most extensive public engagement process our community has ever undertaken to ensure that everyone and every group interested in the waterfront had the opportunity to share their needs, wants and opinions on the future of our waterfront.

The Town of Cobourg and *thinc design* have gone to extraordinary lengths to fully engage the public on issues surrounding the waterfront and to carry out this significant planning process in the most fair, transparent and honest manner possible.

The Town held eight open house workshops, a design charrette and dozens of meetings with community groups and conducted numerous questionnaires and three comprehensive surveys, including one that received 2,000 responses from the public – an engagement level that our consultants have yet to see in their careers.

The public's input has been meticulously reviewed over many months and objective scoring criteria, based on community priorities, was developed.

## **83 IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES GROUPED INTO 24 PROJECTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED**

The final report with all of its findings and recommendations is now posted to the Town's website at [www.cobourg.ca](http://www.cobourg.ca).



The Town of Cobourg's Strategic Plan (2015-2018) established a refreshed vision of the community being a

## PROGRESSIVE, VIBRANT LAKESIDE COMMUNITY

with several important objectives including the implementation of the 2013 Parks Master Plan.

In 2016, Council approved the first major step in achieving this objective called the **Waterfront User Needs Assessment and Detailed Design**, which was to review all previous reports and to further assess waterfront user needs by:

- engaging the public;
- investigating opportunities to:
  - o expand programs and services for the public;
  - o create new employment opportunities; and
  - o generate additional revenue for the municipality.
- creating dynamic and integrated green spaces while finalizing the waterfront design and development process that started decades ago to establish a world-class lakefront for current and future generations.

According to the results of the extensive consultation, a majority of residents want to see an improved waterfront in Cobourg with:

- better amenities (including washrooms/change rooms) and food and beverage services;
- more revenue-generating opportunities that encourage greater spending by visitors that can be reinvested into our community;
- an active and utilized harbour;
- improved access to Victoria Park;
- a more accessible and attractive East Pier;
- a high quality campground; and
- a naturalized West Headland and West Beach with enhanced pedestrian and cycling paths.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Cobourg Residents and the Waterfront

# 97%

Use Cobourg's Waterfront



92%

Victoria Park



89%

Victoria Beach



89%

Boardwalk

# 81%

Indicated the need for Waterfront Improvements



44%

Minor Improvements



37%

Major Improvements



**79%** of residents agreed that access to the West Headland should be restricted to pedestrians and cyclists via networked, accessible natural trails/pathways



**67%** of residents agreed that features and amenities facilitating access/use by various users in Victoria Park should be provided or enhanced

# TOURISM

## FACT:

Tourism is or will be important to the Town's economy.



**80%** of residents agreed (only 9% disagreed) and **77%** of businesses agreed (only 7% disagreed) that Tourism is or will be important to the Town's economy

**46%** of businesses stated that they either depend on or benefit from the trade from tourists/visitors

**76%** of residents agreed (only 5% disagreed) that tourists should contribute a larger share of improvement costs through enhanced revenue generating opportunities



**56%** of residents and **72%** of businesses agreed that the Town should further develop waterfront-based recreation activities as a source of revenue generation

# WATERFRONT OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT

The Town of Cobourg's Recreation and Culture Division is responsible for operating and maintaining Cobourg's waterfront. Within this Division, both the Parks Department and the Waterfront Operations Department work collaboratively to oversee this tremendous community asset.

The Waterfront Operations Department has a mandate to maintain our waterfront assets and to provide quality programs and services to both residents and visitors that have a positive impact both on our quality of life and the local economy. The Department operates several business units with goals to provide quality customer service and to generate revenue to reinvest across the waterfront and the entire community. Each year, the profits generated by this Department have provided dividends to taxpayers that have helped to keep taxes lower.



# CAMPGROUND

Victoria Park Campground provides a unique urban waterfront camping experience to both local and visiting camping enthusiasts. These customers invest in our community by purchasing groceries, gas and other supplies, eat in local restaurants and shop in local businesses.

## FACT:

The Campground has also been a very profitable business unit for the Waterfront Operations Department, providing significant financial dividends to local businesses and taxpayers.

The 71 serviced RV sites and 5 unserviced sites hosted 5,790 overnight guest stays in 2017.

From 2012 - 2017 the campground has generated a profit of \$961,096, transferring \$881,096 to the Town's general revenue to help keep taxes lower.



# HARBOUR

Cobourg Harbour offers a safe and convenient refuge from Lake Ontario. The harbour is home to a marina, yacht club, paddling clubs, Canadian Coast Guard Station and various walkways and trails. It is also the site of several summer events. The harbour offers sheltered waters for anchoring as well as various paddle sports, sailing programs and other watersports. For most of the year, the harbour is greatly under utilized. Fees paid by boat owners have been subsidizing other users and taxpayers' enjoyment of the entire harbour.

USER	HARBOUR SPACE AVAILABLE FOR USE	CURRENT HARBOUR USAGE IN PERSON USER DAYS BY GROUP
Paddle Sports	144,428sq m 75.6%	17.4
Cobourg Yacht Club		18.3
Safe Refuge Anchorage		0.5
Marina Operations	44,889sq m 23.5%	57.5
Canadian Coast Guard	1,619sq m 0%	6.3



**73%** of residents agreed (only 7% disagreed) that an active harbour is important to the successful development of the waterfront

**48%** of residents agreed (only 8% disagreed) and **59%** of businesses agreed (only 3% disagreed) that the Town should organize and schedule the use of the harbour to reduce potential conflicts and to increase access by all users, including power boats



**59%** of residents agreed that the East Pier should be upgraded into a pedestrian and vehicle-friendly space for special events, entertainment, services, etc.



# MARINA

Cobourg Marina is a unique operation on Lake Ontario that provides 218 slips for both seasonal and transient docking for vessels 18 to 80 feet in length in a safe, well-sheltered and attractive harbor with gorgeous vistas.

## FACT:

The marina consistently operates at a profit and has been subsidizing taxpayers by paying for operating and maintenance costs of the entire harbour.

In 2016, the Marina was home to 150 seasonal boats and hosted an estimated, 3,370 visitor boat stays from only 68 transient slips, with 7,077 overnight guest stays acting like a hotel for the community.

In terms of direct revenue from fees in 2016, the 150 seasonal slips generated **\$272,013** while the 68 transient slips generated **\$154,561**.



**55%** of residents agreed (only 15% disagreed) and **64%** of businesses agreed (only 6% disagreed) that the Town should invest in the marina if resulting revenues could finance harbour/waterfront improvements



Economic impact of the Marina from recreational boating for the 2010 to 2016 period alone was estimated to be:

**\$12,282,480**

Marina operations spending locally

**\$4,148,820**

Seasonal boater spending locally

**\$2,512,080**

Transient (visiting) boater spending locally

**\$5,721,580**





# KEY MARINA AND CAMPGROUND FINANCIALS



## MARINA ANNUAL FINANCIALS

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Marina Revenue	\$649,909	\$676,426	\$651,394	\$666,298	\$551,997	\$552,835
Combined Marina & Common Harbour Exp.	\$580,392	\$628,092	\$592,939	\$567,699	\$488,808	\$503,718
Marina Profit - transferred to Reserve Account	<b>\$69,518</b>	<b>\$48,334</b>	<b>\$58,455</b>	<b>\$98,599</b>	<b>\$63,189</b>	<b>\$49,117</b>
*Estimated Common Harbour Expenses	\$113,420	\$119,298	\$85,694	\$82,696	\$70,584	\$68,886
*Estimated Potential Marina Profit	\$182,938	\$167,632	\$144,149	\$181,295	\$133,773	\$117,983

Despite the abnormally high level of Lake Ontario in 2017 that adversely affected Marina revenue, the Marina still produced a surplus.



## CAMPGROUND ANNUAL FINANCIALS

	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012
Surplus Revenue (profit)	\$182,075	\$172,208	\$167,913	\$170,679	\$140,932	\$127,289
Campground Profit Transferred to Reserve Act.	\$0	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$0
Campground Profit Transferred to General Revenue (taxpayer dividend)	\$182,075	\$152,208	\$147,913	\$130,679	\$120,932	\$127,289

In 2018, the Waterfront Operations Department continued the process of separating revenue and expenses into distinct business units for greater transparency and accountability. These changes will allow for more accurate reporting on user-related versus taxpayer-related dividends and obligations. Going forward, these financials will be monitored closely and refined based on more precise and documented tracking.

Using the 2018 accounting approach, Common Harbour expenses (non-Marina Expenses – Taxpayer Dividend) between 2012 and 2017 have only been estimated at \$540,558 which is a significant taxpayer dividend from the Marina that could otherwise have been transferred to the Marina Reserve Account.

## DREDGE

The Cobourg Dredge, known as the Marie Dressler, was purchased in 2009 for \$616,000, with \$109,000 coming from the Marina Reserve Account funded by profits from the Marina. This equipment was a progressive solution to a longstanding problem and is used to remove sand deposits at a significantly lower cost than an outside contract. The equipment is also contracted out whenever possible to other municipalities, marinas and yacht clubs to generate revenue to further reduce the cost of maintaining Cobourg Harbour.

A secondary benefit of the dredging operation has been the deposit of clean sand on to Victoria Park Beach, resulting in a greatly expanded beach area enjoyed by tens of thousands of people each year.

## PARKING

Waterfront parking is an important source of revenue for the Town **bringing in almost \$170,000** annually (gross) from seven parking lots and metres. After expenses, the profits from this business unit are used to offset waterfront costs and other municipal operations as an additional taxpayer dividend.

## FOOD + BEVERAGE

While the Town generates approximately \$20,000 from the Victoria Park Canteen contract each year, this profit is more than offset by almost \$50,000 in annual maintenance costs for the adjacent washrooms. However, there is significant potential for increasing the revenue from food and beverage at our waterfront.



## KEEP YOURSELF INFORMED

The Town of Cobourg's Recreation and Culture Division would like to thank you for your interest, engagement and recommendations for our ongoing and committed work towards maintaining our beautiful waterfront for many years to come.

Please keep yourself informed on the Waterfront User Needs Assessment and Detailed Design in one of many ways:

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

[www.cobourg.ca](http://www.cobourg.ca)

**CALL US**

905-372-9971

**SEND AN EMAIL**

[waterfront@cobourg.ca](mailto:waterfront@cobourg.ca)







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