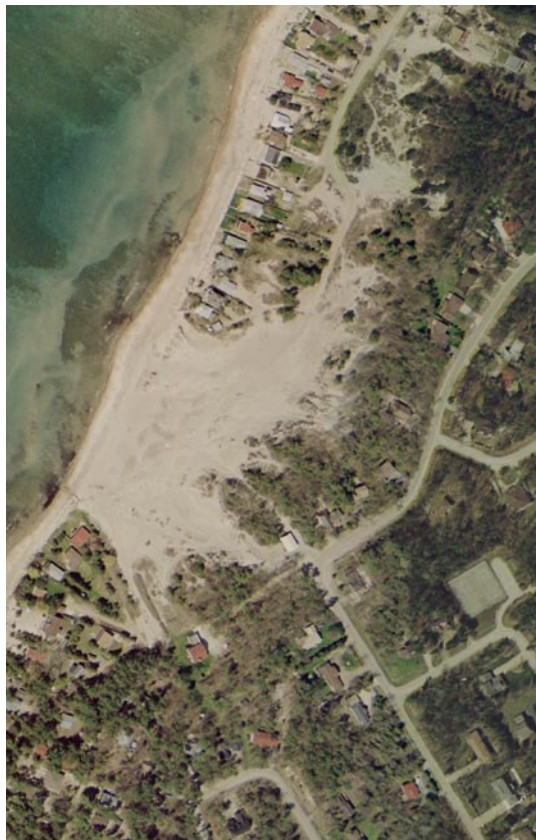
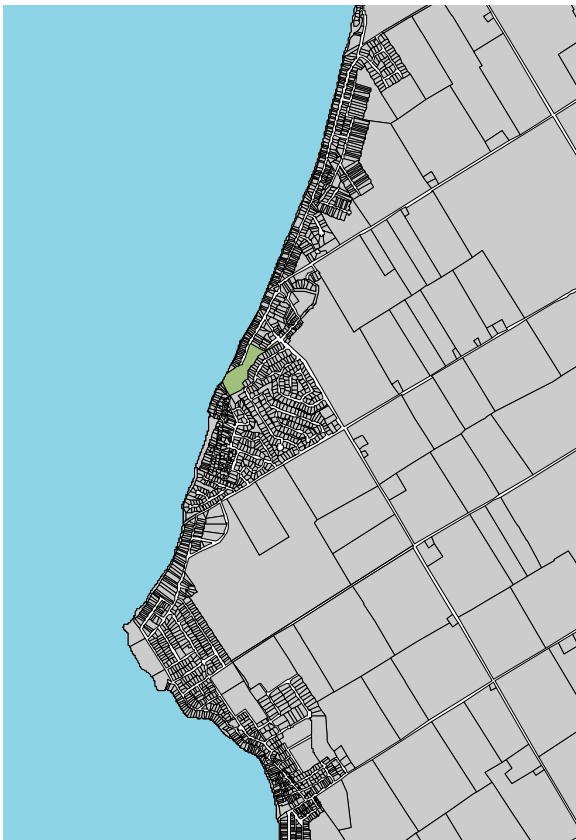




Bluewater Beach Management Plan Area

Township of Tiny

DRAFT: NOVEMBER 14, 2005





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1.0 Introduction

Bluewater Beach Park is located in the Township of Tiny on the south east shore of Georgian Bay. The 7.1 ha park is one of five significant, Township owned shoreline areas identified in the Official Plan. It is also the most intact dune landscape in public ownership in the Township and, as such, requires special consideration in terms of future use and long term protection. Bluewater Beach Park provides waterfront access for cottagers in the immediate area who are not located directly on the shoreline, as well as other members of the public. Even though some of the shoreline north and south of the Park is lined with private cottages, there seems to be a spirit of sharing the incredible resource of the sandy beach. Access to the Park is available from either Trew Avenue or Nicole Boulevard, that both connect with Tiny Beaches Road South.

This report summarizes an approach for the management of Bluewater Beach Park. It is not a scientific study, but rather the product of a process aimed at engaging the community in a new way of collaborating with the Township in achieving mutual objectives. The Management Plan is a strategic vision designed to balance social and ecological issues in a manner that ensures the long term sustainability of the natural landscape. The intent of the Management Plan is to evolve over time as it is a “living” document that will be revised as conditions change.

1.1 The Consultation Process

The Township of Tiny requested that a Management Plan be developed through an open and collaborative process with the community. Workshops were used as a forum for encouraging meaningful input to the preparation of the Plan and to help build broad based support for the approach to restoring the Park.

Two workshops were held; the first in late August and the second in late September. In addition, the consulting team reviewed background documentation on the park and researched dune park precedents to help illustrate management principles.

1.1.1 Workshop One

The first workshop was conducted on August 27, 2005 at Bluewater Beach. Approximately 140 people participated in the site walk and discussion. The purpose of the workshop was to discuss issues, concerns, opportunities and challenges to be considered in developing a Management Plan for Bluewater Beach Park.

Participants in the first workshop were divided into four groups to enable discussions of the challenges and opportunities presented in developing a Management Plan for the Park. The following is a summary of the some of the key issues raised at the workshop.

Role and Function of Bluewater

A number of concerns were expressed about the identification of Bluewater Beach as a “park” and how this label will encourage residents (and potentially non-residents) to access Georgian Bay from Bluewater. Bluewater is one of five parks designated “Open Space” on the western shoreline of the Township of Tiny. There appears to be a consensus that the role and function of Bluewater is very different from the role and function that is played by the other four parks (Woodland, Jackson’s Park, Balm Beach and Lafontaine Park). Specifically, many felt that the park should be retained as a low intensity, passive use environmental management area that is accessible to residents, but not planned to accommodate a high degree of public use.



Many felt that the Park should be zoned as “Environmental Management Area” to help control use.

Communication

Many in the workshop indicated that they had heard rumours of impending plans to further develop the Park and potentially establish a permanent parking area on the lands. In addition, many felt (at least at the outset of the workshop) that a plan had already been prepared. The Township and consultants noted that no plans had been prepared and that this process would be used to develop a plan. It was agreed that a communication strategy will be required in the future to ensure that all those who have an interest in the development and use of the Park receive accurate information.

Environmental Management

Many at the workshop indicated that the protection and enhancement of the dunes in the Park should be a fundamental premise upon which all other activity on the site should be considered. Protection measures were discussed, including wind breaks, boardwalks, defined walkways and plantings.



Residents agreed to provide photos and anecdotal descriptions of the Park as it once was to assist the team in developing a restoration and preservation strategy. Some recalled the swallow nesting areas and large wetland features, as well as the continuous dune close to the shoreline. The management strategy must be developed in the context of the larger landscape that includes private and public lands along the shoreline.

Some residents asked that the outflow pipe be investigated to determine the source and possible “day lighting” opportunities - i.e. restoration as a natural creek channel. This initiative would improve water quality before draining into Georgian Bay.

Access

Many at the workshop indicated that there is a need to ensure that ATV’s and snowmobiles are not permitted in the Park because of the sensitivity of the dunes. In addition, pedestrian routes in the Park need to be well defined. With respect to parking, residents acknowledged there is a need to provide some parking for those who drive to the park. A number of options need to be explored in this regard.





There was some consensus that only permit parking should be provided at the park.

Amenities

Most people attending the workshop agreed there is a need for washrooms at the park, however they should remain portable. There were some who indicated that there should be no washrooms at all. This issue was to be explored further at the second workshop.

Education and Stewardship

There was consensus at the workshop that signs should be placed to enhance public awareness of the fragility of the dune ecosystem. In addition, some consideration should be given to not calling Bluewater Beach Park a park, but instead calling it the Bluewater Beach Environmental Management Area. Lastly, there is a need to ensure that the Township establishes a partnership with area residents to ensure that good stewardship practices are developed and implemented over time.

1.1.2 Workshop Two

The second workshop was held on September 24, 2005 at the Wyebridge Community Centre. About 80 people attended the session. Following a brief presentation as an orientation to the agenda, participants were divided into four groups to discuss suggestions with respect to:

- environmental restoration;
- use;
- education;
- priorities;
- monitoring; and,
- roles and responsibilities.

Groups were asked to record comments and suggestions on a copy of the base plan of Bluewater Beach Park. The input was used to help shape the recommendations in the following sections, ultimately providing a basis for the Management Plan.





2.0 Restoration Principles

The approach to restoring the landscape and managing use at Bluewater Beach Park is based on principles of sustainable design. This approach requires that holistic and ecologically based strategies be identified and implemented to rehabilitate the natural dune ecosystem.

This Management Plan is based on the following fundamental principles that form the foundation of the recommendations:

1. Restore the beach ecosystem, including the dunes and natural drainage system.
2. Use the capacity of the natural system to determine human use.
3. Extend the restoration initiatives along the shoreline beyond the Park to the residential landscapes.
4. Enhance the awareness of the fragility of the dune ecosystem.
5. Manage the ecosystem at a regional scale.
6. Encourage biodiversity.
7. Plan over long periods of time so that the dune ecosystem can continue to evolve.

These principles were tabled at the second workshop when participants were asked to revise the statements. No suggestions for revisions were received.

The Management Plan is described in the following report sections:

- Environmental Restoration;
- Use;
- Education;
- Maintenance and Monitoring; and,
- Implementation.

Recommendations relate to the public lands of the Park only.



3.0 Environmental Restoration

3.1 What Is It?

Environmental restoration is the process of identifying, protecting and rehabilitating the ecology of an area based on a management strategy. The goal is to re-establish the structure, function, diversity and dynamics of a specific ecosystem. Restoring Bluewater Beach's landscape back to its full original state may not be possible, or practical, given the size of the site and the ongoing pressures from the surrounding development. However, a properly executed landscape restoration program can help to restore some of the original features of the dunes in terms of the landscape's structure, function, behaviour and inter-relationships.



3.2 What Are the Issues?

Dune landscapes are dynamic and change gradually over time due to the influence of wind, waves and available sand. However, at Bluewater Beach, impacts from park users have reduced the vegetative cover and prevented young plants from establishing and fulfilling their role in dune stabilization. As a result, the erosion process has been accelerated causing mobilization of large quantities of sand. Not only is this compromising the dune landscape, but it is also causing a maintenance problem for the Township and neighboring properties.



Without a properly conceived plan to restore Bluewater Beach Park, the dune landscape will continue to erode and degrade. As a result, the special features of the landscape including the flora, fauna and the dunes themselves will continue to decline and eventually will be lost forever.



3.3 Recommendations

To help achieve the community’s restoration objectives for Bluewater Beach Park, the following initiatives are recommended:

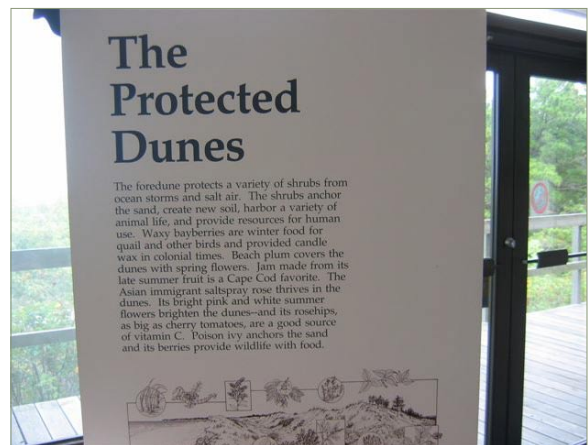
3.3.1 Biological Assessment

There has been significant vegetation destruction of the dunes. Dune plants are hardy and can withstand temperature extremes, lack of nutrients, drought and sand burial. But, they do not tolerate trampling.

In order to determine the key stabilizing plants and other plants that contribute to greater biodiversity of the dune system, a more thorough science-based understanding of the Bluewater Beach Park landscape is needed to determine the most effective approach to restore the dune landscape. A biological assessment would assess the detailed form and structure of the dunes and the plant communities and primary species of the dunes. The feasibility of “day-lighting” the existing storm water outlet, and reintroducing wetlands, should also be investigated as part of the more detailed biological assessment..

In order for the restoration of Bluewater to be successful, it must be considered and implemented within the larger dune complex context. Therefore, the biological assessment should include an inventory of the landscape characteristics of nearby cottage properties.

Although a more detailed inventory for the dunes is required, some work can occur in the interim.





Bluewater Beach Park





3.3.2 Ecological Management Zones

Preliminary evaluation of Bluewater Beach Park suggests the Park be divided into the following management areas (see Figure opposite):

1. Beach Area;
2. Fore Dune Restoration;
3. Wetland Restoration;
4. Back Dune Restoration;
5. Management Protection; and,
6. Cottage Management.

For each zone, the following initiatives should be undertaken:

Beach Area

The beach area is open to the public and modified by lakeshore processes and lake levels. Lower lake levels may result in more sand contributing to the dune system. No active management is suggested for this area.

Fore Dune Restoration Area

This area is currently under threat as it is located immediately adjacent to the beach area – the highest use area in the Park. In the short term, this area should be fenced off to protect it from further impacts and wind erosion. In the long term, wind breaks, vegetation restoration, and possibly a fixed barrier between the beach and fore dune area is required.

Wetland Restoration Area

Residents speak of this area as historically having wetlands which have long since dried up. The biological assessment for Bluewater Beach Park should investigate the feasibility of reintroducing wetlands to this area. It should be noted that it may be difficult to

introduce a wetland into this area without creating a “lined” pond, since Georgian Bay water levels have been declining in recent years. In the short term, this zone should be fenced to prevent access, while in the long term, a detailed plan for providing wind barriers and vegetation restoration is required.

Back Dune Restoration Area

Located further inland, the back dune restoration zone has been heavily impacted by Park visitors. These dunes require slope stabilization, vegetation restoration, and barrier fencing to help prevent further impact from use and wind erosion. Wind barriers will also help reduce the Township’s and resident’s maintenance requirements to deal with blowing sand and sand accumulation on private property.

Management Protection Area

At the north end of the site, the Park’s landscape appears to be less impacted by user activities, with the exception of the area immediately adjacent to Trew Avenue. Restoration requirements for this zone include barrier fencing along Trew Avenue with a focus on management initiatives related to continued protection of the area.

Cottage Management Area

The private properties located around Bluewater Beach Park are part of the area’s dune ecosystem. What happens in the areas surrounding the Park impacts the Park’s ecology. How residents landscape and maintain their properties impacts the dunes. Therefore, direction regarding the most appropriate manner in which to manage the landscape of private properties is needed. These recommendations need to be provided as part of the community-wide environmental restoration strategy.

Bluewater Beach Management Plan Area



Management Areas





3.3.3 Preliminary initiatives

A variety of fences and barriers should be implemented in the short term to prevent further degradation of the landscape. This includes:

Temporary Fencing of Dunes

Fencing the perimeter of the dunes will prevent users from accessing the sensitive dune landscape, protecting existing plants, reducing erosion on slopes due to visitors climbing dune slopes and helping existing plants to establish.

Barrier Fencing

In key locations, barrier fencing will help to define the Park's edge and separate sensitive areas from more active use areas. Currently, visitors to Bluewater Beach Park are expected to understand the limits of the Park and the extent of sensitive areas without the aid of signage or visual queues.

Barrier fencing should be provided where heavier use threatens the dune landscape. Key locations include the east side of Trew Avenue, at Trew Avenue and Nicole Boulevard entrances, and as a separation between the beach (passive use area) and dune restoration zones.

Barrier fencing does not necessarily need to be a permanent feature, but should be located, designed and constructed to provide a physical barrier that will withstand a reasonable amount of impact. Once restoration of the dunes has occurred, and a more natural visual barrier has been created, the barrier fencing can be considered for removal if it is felt the fencing no longer serves a purpose and that it detracts from the aesthetic of the dunes.

Wind Protection Fencing

Temporary snow fencing placed parallel to the shore/perpendicular to the dominant wind direction will help minimize the transporting of sand through wind erosion. This will help facilitate the establishment of plants and limit transporting of sand from the dunes into neighbouring properties and onto adjacent streets. Key locations include between the beach and fore dune, at the Nicole Boulevard entrance, and between the dunes and adjacent properties.





Fencing



4.0 Park Uses

4.1 What Are They?

Bluewater Beach Park is identified as a community park. It is public park and according to the Official Plan, permitted uses are those related to passive and active recreation, conservation and forestry. Uses are allowed in accordance with good management practices.

In the case of Bluewater Beach Park, the most appropriate uses and those recommended in this report are passive in nature and support conservation initiatives aimed at protecting and restoring this valuable resource.

4.2 What Are the Issues?

- Conflict between parked cars and the use and enjoyment of private property of area's seasonal and permanent residents;
- Disregard of the sensitivity of the dune ecosystem by many users of Bluewater Beach Park;
- Inappropriate use of Bluewater Beach Park by people on all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles; and,
- Removal of blow sand by the municipality to enable beach access.

4.3 Recommendations

Park uses must be restricted to appropriate activities given the sensitivity of the dune ecosystem. To help minimize impact while still allowing use of Bluewater Beach Park, three approaches are suggested:

1. confine activities and facilities to areas which are least sensitive and more resilient;
2. design areas for use to mitigate impact; and,
3. actively manage impacts of use.

The most economically sustainable approach to maintaining the ecological integrity of the Park is to confine users to the areas that are the least sensitive and more resilient. This approach requires the least amount of capital investment in new park infrastructure, and minimizes the expense for ongoing maintenance and mitigation of impacts.

Realistically however, to continue the use and enjoyment of Bluewater Beach Park, a combination of all three approaches will be required to manage impacts. Therefore, the Park should be organized into 5 use areas based on sensitivity of the environment, the functional requirements of the Park and the planned activities.

The five areas are:

1. Restoration & Protection Area
2. Beach Area
3. Boardwalk
4. Entrances
5. Public Roads

Given the “environment first” philosophy of the Official Plan, the development of parking or any other amenities are to be designed and constructed in a manner that ensures the natural features and functions of Bluewater Beach Park are protected and/or enhanced, and that parking does not encroach on the natural area.



Use Areas





4.3.1 Restoration/Protection Area

The majority of the 7.1 ha park should be identified as a restoration and protection area. This includes the fore dune restoration area, wetland restoration area, back dune restoration area and the management protection area.

The exact boundary for these areas will be determined through the biological assessment. The restoration protection area will include the most sensitive areas of the Park, which are the most susceptible to user impacts and need to be protected to help preserve the dunes.

Public access to these areas should be prohibited to help the dunes regenerate. However, in the long term, managed access and opportunities for nature interpretation can be considered.



4.3.2 Beach Area

The beach area will continue to be the primary destination for visitors. Uses permitted will be passive in nature in keeping with the sensitive nature of the landscape. Activities, such as swimming, sunbathing and walking, will be the focus of the area. As in all areas of the Park, motorized vehicles and active recreational activities will continue to be prohibited.





4.3.3 Boardwalk

The boardwalk will provide the link between the main access points and the beach through the dunes. The boardwalk will provide pedestrian access and help keep users on the trail and minimize impacts to the dune system.

Until the boardwalk is constructed, the proposed corridor for the boardwalk should be fenced off to prevent users from wandering into the dunes and trampling vegetation. Once the boardwalk is constructed, a large amount of the fencing can be removed at the Township's discretion.





4.3.4 Entrances

The two main entrances to the Park located at the end of Trew Avenue and at Nicole Boulevard should continue to provide access. Three secondary access points, two located at either end of the beach, and one on the west end, should also continue to be used. All other access points to the park should be blocked and rehabilitated to prevent further impact.

The two main access points to the park – Trew and Nicole – should provide information on the Park, post the rules and regulations, provide garbage and recycling facilities, and washroom facilities. The two secondary access points should also be signed to inform visitors that they are entering Bluewater Beach Park and outline the park's rules and regulations.

Washrooms

Although the majority of residents who participated in the workshop sessions supported the continued provision of washrooms, some residents did not feel that they were necessary. The fact that Bluewater Beach Park is a public park, and will be visited by residents, who may not live close by, makes the need for washrooms a reality that cannot be ignored. With no other public washroom facilities available in the immediate area, washrooms are an important part of ensuring Bluewater Beach Park is used appropriately. The alternative most likely would be for some visitors to find random places throughout the park to answer nature's call.

Washrooms for Bluewater Beach Park are recommended to continue to be portable systems which would be provided during the main visitor period between May and September. Composting toilet solutions, which could be housed in a more permanent structure to improve the aesthetics of the entrances, should also be considered over the long term.



4.3.5 Public Roads

Trew Avenue and Nicole Boulevard provide access to Bluewater Beach Park and are currently used for public parking.

Parking

One of the most pressing issues to deal with at management area is parking. Given that the Management Plan recommends the area be used for passive open space, it is recommended that a formal parking area not be established on the lands.

However, there is an expectation that residents will continue to access the area by car, particularly if they do not reside in the immediate area. There is a need to ensure that an appropriate amount of on-street parking is available.

In terms of road access, there are two locations where on-street parking is feasible - Trew Avenue and Nicole Boulevard. Both of these streets are local roads and are not designed to accommodate large volumes of traffic or on-street parking. However,



these are the only two streets close enough to the area that can reasonably be expected to be the site of any on-street parking.

Since it is suggested that Bluewater Beach Park be used for passive use parking should be minimized to assist in managing the number of people who can access the area in an effort to restore the dunes.

In 1999/2000, the Township prepared a shoreline parking management strategy (SPMS). The intent of the SPMS was to make recommendations on how many parking spaces were required for Township-owned lands primarily at the ends of road allowances. The method used at the time was one used by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) for park planning purposes. This method was used to determine parking for Bluewater Beach Park. The intent is to establish the carrying capacity of a beach area. To complete carrying capacity calculations, the amount of 'dry beach' is required. The area of the 'dry beach' is defined as that area between the water's edge and a line that is no more than 30 metres (100 feet) from the water's edge, or a lesser number, if the 'dry beach' ends before the 30 metre (100 foot) mark is reached. Lands beyond the 30 metre (100 foot) mark are considered as part of the 'backshore' by the MNR.

Once the area of the 'dry beach' is known, one of three density factors can be applied based on the surrounding landform and vegetation constraints and the user's perception of crowding. The three density figures are 9 square metres (100 square feet) per person, 23 square metres (250 square feet) per person and 46 square metres (500 square feet) per

person. A factor to be considered in assigning density is the availability of amenities such as picnic areas and washrooms for public use. If an area has these amenities, it should theoretically be able to sustain a higher level of activity. The density selected by Council at the time was the 23 square metres per person standard. This standard was then multiplied by 3.5 (the number of people per vehicle) to derive the need for parking spaces.

In the case of the Bluewater Beach Park, there is about 4,420 square metres (45,963 square feet) of 'beach' between the closest dune to the water's edge and the water's edge itself. The three density calculations result in the following numbers:

- Density of 9 square metres per person –
491 people = 140 cars
- Density of 23 square metres per person –
192 people = 55 cars
- Density of 46 square metres per person –
96 people = 27 cars

If the above calculations alone are used to determine the number of parking spaces required, between 27 and 140 parking spaces would be required. However, the determination of the number of parking spaces required also has to take into account the following:

- the role and function of the Bluewater Beach management plan area;
- the means of access to the Bluewater Beach management plan area (arterial versus local roads); and,
- the number of people that access the Bluewater Beach management plan area by foot.



In terms of use, it is recommended that the lands be used on a passive low intensity basis. However, the lands are an ‘asset’ to the Township and residents should be permitted to access these public lands as well, provided the access is carefully managed. In addition, both Trew Avenue and Nicole Boulevard are local roads and should not be planned to become major parking areas, as a result of the function of the roads and the character of the neighbourhoods they serve. Lastly, given the ease of access to the site from adjacent lands by foot at the present time and in the future, a considerable number of residents can already access the lands without needing to drive.



Therefore, no less than 13 on-street parking spaces should be established for the management plan area. This number represents 50% of the number of spaces required if the low density standard was applied. Four parking spaces should be located on Nicole with the remainder located on Trew. All of these spaces should be ‘permit-parking’ spaces only to recognize the role and function of the management plan area. In addition, five non-permit spaces should be provided on Trew Avenue. Parking should be monitored following improvements.

Bicycle racks should be provided at the entrances to the Park on Trew Avenue and Nicole Boulevard to encourage access by other means of transportation.



5.0 Education/Interpretation

5.1 What Is It?

Education provides the best single tool for shaping experiences and sharing values. By providing an awareness of the environment, the values that are necessary for the protection of the environment are taught. This will help reduce human use impacts on the ecology of Bluewater Beach, thus reducing management efforts and the cost of maintenance for the Township.

5.2 What Are the Issues?

- Disregard for the sensitivity of the dune ecosystem;
- Threats to private property resulting from increased erosion;
- Opportunity to generate community interest and involvement in the protection and restoration of the dunes.



5.3 Recommendations

There are a range of opportunities, methods and formats to educate others on Bluewater Beach Park and its dune ecosystem. These include:

1. Post information boards at the main entrances to the park to describe the dune ecosystem and the threats to their sustainability;
2. Write and distribute fact sheets on the dune ecosystem to area businesses, cottagers, permanent residents, community facilities;
3. Develop signs for specific restoration initiatives to be posted in the vicinity of the restoration initiative;
4. Write articles for the local newspaper describing the sensitivity of the dune ecosystem;
5. Provide a community information board to post information on current initiatives for Bluewater Beach Park;
6. Provide a link on the Township's website with links to community groups involved in the restoration and management of Bluewater Beach Park such as bluewaterdunes.org; and,
7. Conduct annual site interpretive walks.



-  Park Entrance/
Interpretation
*Overview
Rules & Regulations*
-  Management Area
*(locate to identify and explain
each zone)*
-  Restoration Initiatives
(locate to identify projects)
-  Parking Enforcement

Signage



6.0 Maintenance & Monitoring

6.1 What Is It?

On going maintenance and monitoring of Bluewater Beach Park is required to help in the dune restoration process and to enhance the park user's experience. Maintenance is the ongoing day-to-day site management activity required to keep the park clean, useable and safe for the public. Monitoring is a long-term process designed to assess the maintenance activities and restoration initiatives in the Park. The monitoring process will identify changes to the Park maintenance requirements and the restoration practices as the site and associated uses change over time. This 'adaptive management' approach is most appropriate for Bluewater Beach Park.

6.2 What Are the Issues?

Active maintenance is required throughout all areas of the Park. Some of the maintenance issues identified by the public include:

- Garbage Clean up: insufficient number and capacity of garbage receptacles or pick up frequency to accommodate level of use;
- Lack of recycling bins;
- Lack of maintenance of the washrooms;
- Illegal parking; and,
- Illicit activities after hours (ATVs, drinking, camping).

Monitoring issues focused on park users not respecting the park rules and regulations. In addition, there was discussion regarding ongoing bylaw enforcement, which is required throughout the year, but especially during peak use periods between May and September. Issues include the following:

- parking;
- appropriate use;
- after hours use of the park; and,
- erosion.

6.3 Recommendations

To address maintenance concerns, the following is recommended:

- Enhance garbage collection by the Township during peak use periods;
- Provide additional garbage receptacles at Park entrances and at the beach area;
- Provide recycling bins at Park entrances and at the beach;
- Focus garbage clean-up throughout the Park, especially in areas which are currently problematic including Trew Avenue and the beach.

With an increase in the Township's investment of the Park, will come increased maintenance requirements. Therefore, in addition to the current maintenance requirements identified by residents at the workshop, maintenance will be necessary for the variety of restoration initiatives proposed. This includes:

- Inspect, and reinstall as required, snow fencing on a weekly basis to ensure it is still effective;
- Inspect boardwalk weekly and repair damaged sections as necessary;
- Inspect barrier fencing weekly and repair damaged sections as necessary;
- Washroom facilities – inspect and clean daily during peak use periods to ensure they are clean and functioning properly; and,
- Seasonal opening and shut down of washroom facilities.

To help monitor and enforce appropriate use for Bluewater Beach Park, enhanced by-law enforcement is required. This includes periodic inspection of the Park including restoration areas and beach. Parking enforcement will also be required to ensure the new permit parking approach is successful.



However, the Township has limited resources to take on the full extent of maintenance and monitoring required for Bluewater Beach Park. Wherever possible, the community needs to assist in maintaining and monitoring the Park. Community assistance in monitoring and maintaining fencing and other restoration initiatives would help relieve some of the burden on Township resources. Whenever a member of the community identifies inappropriate use of the Park, it is recommended that the individual contact the Township to report the infraction. By members of the community being the eyes and ears for the Township, it will help augment the Township's resources and improve Bluewater Beach Park.



Garbage and Recycling Improvements





7.0 Implementation

7.1 What Is It?

The restoration and improvements to Bluewater Beach Park will occur over many years as budget is made available for restoration of the Park and for the various capital improvements outlined here. This plan is the first step in restoring the dunes. However, to be successful, ongoing assistance from the community will be required. The Township and the community must collaborate during implementation and monitoring of the management plan.

7.2 What Are the Issues?

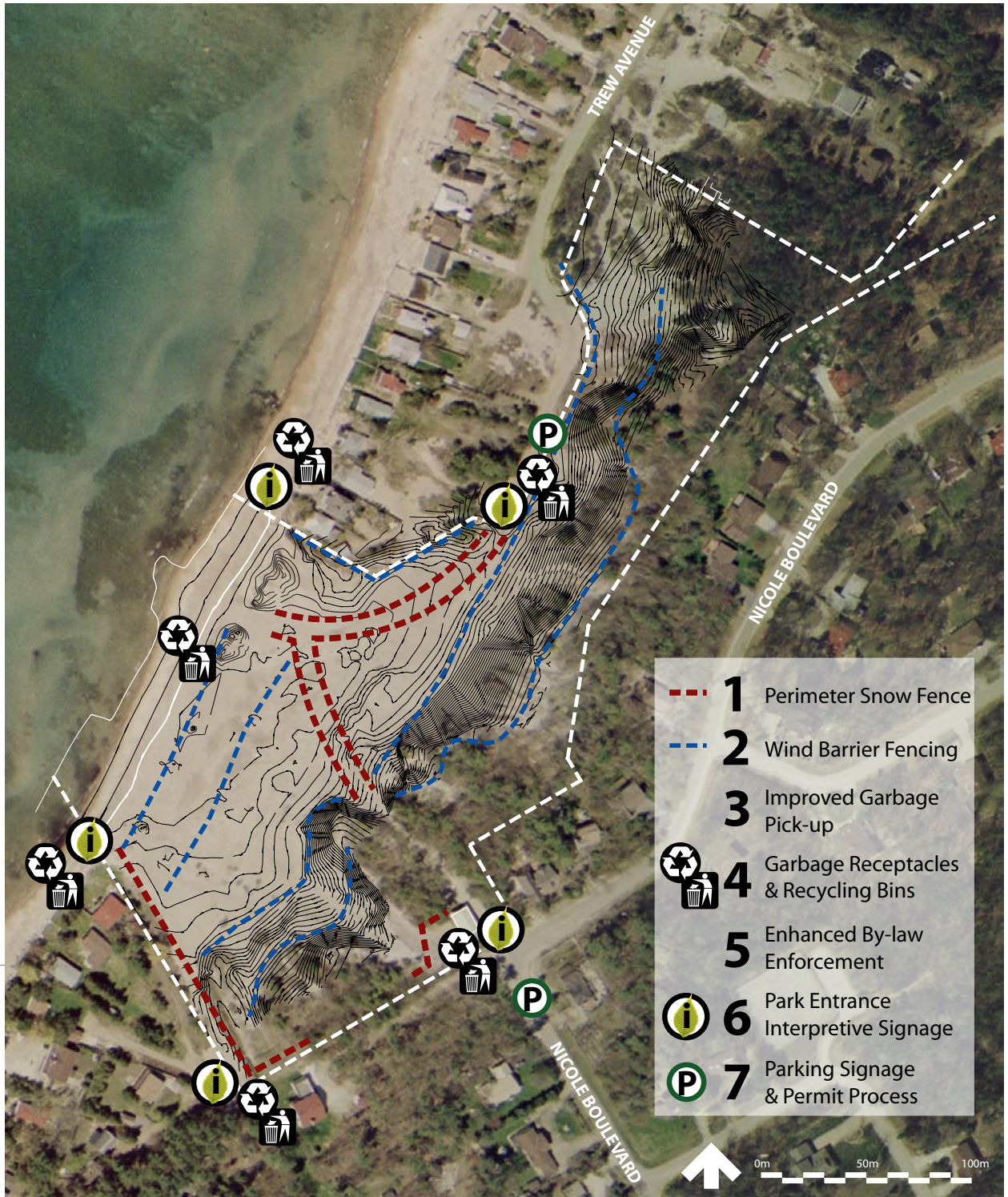
- Priorities for restoration and Park improvements need to be established;
- Budget needs to be allocated for Park improvements and initiatives; and,
- A partnership needs to be established between Tiny Township and the community.

7.3 Recommendations

7.3.1 Management Initiatives

The following table outlines the recommended sequence for implementing the various initiatives described in this report. Where applicable, a cost is applied to the initiative. If the Township opts to be responsible for construction, costs could be reduced by 30%. Where an initiative is a change in the Township’s administrative, maintenance or enforcement practices, the estimated cost has yet to be determined. In these instances “TBD” is indicated. The costs provided are for materials and installation only. The time to coordinate, design or manage the initiative are not included in the estimated prices. These numbers are for budget purposes only.

<i>Short Term</i>		
Priority	Initiative	Estimated Cost (Materials & Labour)
1	Perimeter Snow fencing of dunes	\$10,000
2	Wind Barrier Snow Fencing	\$14,000
3	Improved Garbage Pick-up	TBD
4	Additional Garbage Receptacles & Recycling Bins	\$7,500
5	Enhanced By-law Enforcement	TBD
6	Park Interpretive signage at main entrances to the park	\$5,000
7	Parking Signage and permit process for Trew Avenue and Nicole Boulevard	TBD

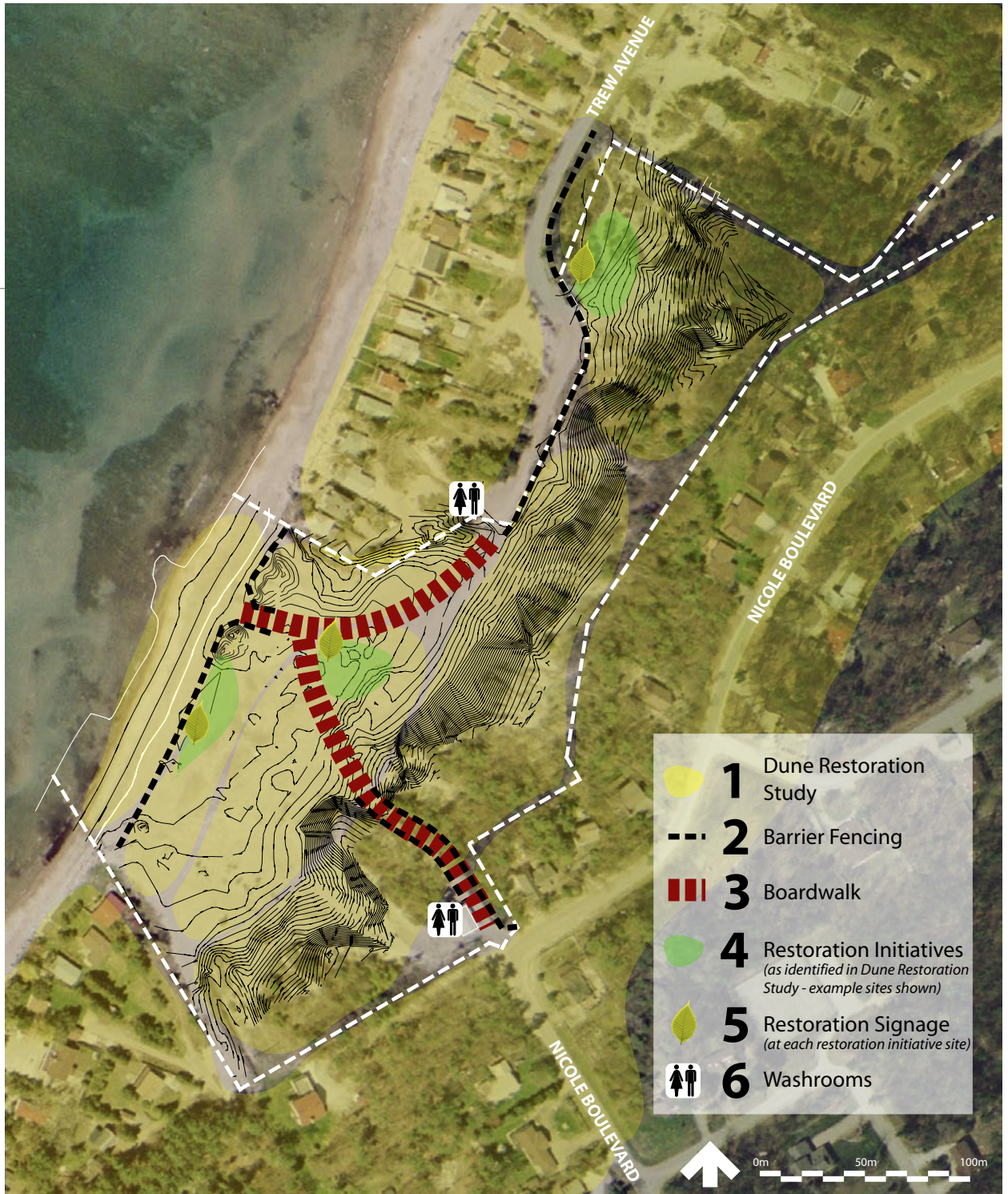


Short Term Priorities



Long Term

Priority	Initiative	Estimated Cost <i>(Materials & Labour)</i>
1	Biological Study <ul style="list-style-type: none">• form and structure of the dunes, plant communities and primary species• Restoration Priorities and Phasing• Techniques (wind barriers, fencing)• Management• Investigate Potential for day lighting culvert	TBD
2	Barrier Fencing	\$75,000
3	Board Walk	\$90,000
4	Restoration Planting	TBD
5	Restoration Initiatives Signage	\$2,500
6	Washrooms – improved structure for portable toilets or composting toilets	\$15,000



-  **1** Dune Restoration Study
-  **2** Barrier Fencing
-  **3** Boardwalk
-  **4** Restoration Initiatives
(as identified in Dune Restoration Study - example sites shown)
-  **5** Restoration Signage
(at each restoration initiative site)
-  **6** Washrooms

Long Term Priorities





7.3.2 Roles and Responsibilities

The Township and community must work together in the restoration and management of Bluewater Beach Park. Each has specific roles and responsibilities to help make the park a success. A third group – a Bluewater Advisory Committee (eg. “Friends of Bluewater Beach”) – is recommended as a liaison between the Township and the community. A Bluewater Advisory Committee is an important part of generating community involvement and ensuring the Park reflects the wishes and meets the needs of the community - those that are adjacent to the park and those further away.

The success of many parks hinges on community involvement. Working in partnership with the Township, the community needs to participate in restoration process, providing their knowledge, skills and experience to the wide arrange of initiatives that need to be implemented. Community volunteers are an invaluable resource for a project of this nature. Only with continued community involvement and interest in the process, will the restoration of Bluewater Beach dunes become a reality.

Responsibilities of the various partners include:

Township

- Provide adequate funding to facilitate implementation of the recommended environmental restoration initiatives;
- Coordinate and oversee the implementation of Park restoration initiatives, capital improvements and monitoring initiatives;
- Coordinate the activities of community groups (or Advisory Committee if struck) involved in implementing the management plan;

- Ensure projects initiated by the public for Bluewater Beach Park are consistent with the objectives of the Management Plan;
- Regulate and enforce activities within the Park consistent with municipal by-laws;
- Educate municipal staff in regards to proper maintenance practices for Bluewater Beach Park;
- Enhance public awareness of the sensitivity of Bluewater Beach Park;

Bluewater Advisory Committee

- Work with Municipality in determining the goals and objectives for Bluewater Beach Park;
- Organize the community to undertake specific projects and initiatives within the Park; and,
- Lead fundraising initiatives and seek out alternative sources of funding for Park projects.

Community Involvement Opportunities

- Volunteering
 - Dune Planting;
 - Maintenance: maintain fencing, garbage pick-up;
 - Assist with fundraising initiatives;
- Lead through example in the care and maintenance of their own properties located within the dune environment; and,
- Monitor Park use and notify the municipality of any inappropriate activities.

Other agencies, such as the Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation, could be an invaluable resource to the community. They are a grassroots organization focused on protecting the coastal environment of Lake Huron. They function as a local coastal management resource team for government agencies and the public.



7.3.3 Implementing Planning Regulations

Bluewater Beach Park is designated Open Space in the Township of Tiny Official Plan. The objectives of the Open Space designation are to ensure that:

- the use and development of Open Space lands is consistent with the Environment First philosophy of the Official Plan;
- all Open Space lands are used in a manner which reflects their capacity for public use;
- the impacts of the Open Space lands on adjacent land uses and the character of the surrounding neighbourhood are minimized; and,
- the residents of the Township have access to a properly planned and accessible Open Space network.

The Official Plan requires that plans be prepared for the larger Township parks on the western shoreline to ensure that they are effectively planned to both accommodate use and minimize the impacts of that use on the environment and adjacent residential areas. The Official Plan further states that “given the Environment First philosophy of this Plan, the development of additional parking areas, facilities and other infrastructure should be carried out in a manner that ensures that the natural features and functions of these parks are protected and/or enhanced”.

It is recommended by this study that the lands be placed in the Open Space (OS) zone in the Implementing Zoning By-law. A number of residents have requested that the Township consider placing the lands within the Environmental Protection zone to more properly recognize the environmental sensitivity of the site and to limit use.

Under the Planning Act, any Zoning By-law passed by a municipality must conform with the Official Plan. This is to ensure that both documents work together and that there is no confusion about what is intended to happen on any particular property. The placing of Bluewater Beach Park in the Open Space zone will clearly conform with the Official Plan, since the lands are designated Open Space. However, placing the lands in the Environmental Protection zone does not clearly conform with the Official Plan, since the intent of the Environmental Protection designation is somewhat different than the intent of the Open Space designation, at least as articulated in the Official Plan.

The Environmental Protection designation is intended to recognize Natural Heritage Features that been identified by the Province or County and which merit some level of protection according to either the Provincial Policy Statement or the County of Simcoe Official Plan. Bluewater Beach Park has not been identified as a Provincially, Regionally or locally significant Natural Heritage Feature. The Official Plan does provide for the identification of lands within the Environmental Protection designation if, as a result of the review of a development application, additional lands have been found to be environmentally sensitive and it has been decided that they should be protected through restrictive planning controls. This type of situation does not apply to the Bluewater Beach Park circumstance. As a result, placing the lands within the Environmental Protection zone would not conform with the intent of the Official Plan, and would create a precedent with respect to how lands are zoned in the Municipality.



It would appear that the main motivation behind the request is the feeling that future Councils and/or Township staff may not abide with the recommendations that are ultimately adopted by the current Council at the conclusion of the Management Plan process. This is a governance issue, not a zoning issue. With the creation of an effective local committee to oversee/monitor/manage the Bluewater Beach Park management area, with the committee working in close consultation with Council, the objectives of the Management Plan will become broadly accepted by the entire community.

Notwithstanding the above, there is some merit in considering the application of specific zoning provisions on the lands to clearly articulate that certain things will not happen on the lands in the future without there being a specific public process followed. In particular, the zoning by-law could prohibit the development of permanent washroom facilities. In addition, the zoning by-law could prevent the development of off-street parking areas. A parking area would be defined as an area of land not located on a public street which is constructed, designed or maintained for the temporary parking of vehicles. The inclusion of special zoning provisions dealing with the washroom and parking area issue would conform with the Open Space designation in the Official Plan, since the designation anticipates the development of many different types of public areas.