

**REPORT TO: Hamilton Chamber of Commerce – Business Development Committee**

**FROM: Waterfront Revitalization Task Force – Chair Bruce Youngblud**

**DATE: February 13, 2008**

**Re: West Harbour Waterfront Recreation Master Plan  
- City of Hamilton**

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**Background:**

At the request of the Waterfront Revitalization Task Force, Bruce Youngblud, CFP, CIM, chaired a short-term task force, of 18 members drawn from Stakeholders, to provide comments to the City of Hamilton on its draft West Harbour Waterfront Recreational Master (WHRM) Plan and also on the Hamilton Waterfront Trust Harbour West Concept (HWT) Plan dated November, 2007.

Members of the Task Force include:

Bruce Youngblud  
Alice MacDonald  
Sandy MacDonald  
Dan Rodrigues  
David Bailey  
John Dolbec  
Herman Turkstra  
Martin Lipp  
Laurel Thompson  
Charles Mitchell  
Wally Vaters (RHYC)  
Stephan Park  
Laura Babcock  
Jay Higgins  
Tyler MacLeod  
Werner Plessl  
Linda MacDonald  
Mike Foley

Meetings of the Task Force were held on October 24, November 23, November 29, December 10, 2007, and January 23, 2008. Further communications regarding the Plan and Task Force comments were completed via e-mail.

Now both studies are incomplete. The WHRM Plan is tentatively scheduled for presentation to Council in September and the HWT Plan is evolving through stakeholder discussion.

## Guiding Principles:

Hamilton Waterfront Trust	WHRM – Previous Draft Version
Significantly increase public access to the waterfront	Maintain existing redeveloped facilities if they work
Positive environmental approach, especially with respect to shoreline & habitat	Maintain multi-use Waterfront Trail along the water's edge
A harbourfront precinct designed as a destination for all Hamiltonians	Start with a clean slate as far as existing tenants are concerned
Financial viability	Expand commercial space to help pay for the waterfront revitalization
Innovative and sustainable adaptive reuse of existing elements	Reduce surface parking by better & improved transit & underground/multi-level parking
Recognition of historical & cultural waterfront institutions	Improved washroom facilities throughout the waterfront precinct
Positive integration with the community in a local context	Winter storage for boats to be located off-site or an unused/unseen area
Utilizing existing business/operations/facilities/ investments to their full value	Make the waterfront a 'people place – more art, shops, restaurants, events
Integrate efficient use of tax money and private capital (tax dollars on large scale in favour of projects)	Design for 500,000 Hamiltonians not just 2,000 boaters
Ensure that all proposed operations (residential, marina, clubs, commercial) fall within a long term sustainable, competitively priced business modal	Integrate design for all users
.	Add opportunity for other activities, i.e., rental shops
	Encourage four season use of the waterfront
	Affordable
	Minimize infilling of the Harbour and maintain character of waterfront/shoreline interface
	Retain & explore cultural/heritage feature
	Improve swimming opportunities

The proposed guiding principles (see below) are based on the common themes that emerged from stakeholder consultations.

The HWT PLAN is seen as an evolution and in many ways improvement on the WHRM plan. As such, it has many positive points. A great deal more work must be done before it can be accepted as final. This report should be viewed as an interim report. As the plans from the Hamilton Waterfront Trust and the City's West Harbour Recreation Master Plan evolve, additional updates will be provided to the BDC and Chamber Board

with a final recommendation being submitted before city council's consideration of the final plan.

Our taskforce formulated additional guiding principles which should be incorporated into the final draft of the plan (listed below under Recommendation #1). Specifically, we recommend the following be endorsed by the Chamber of Commerce for inclusion into the final plan:

### **Recommendations:**

The Hamilton Chamber of Commerce urges that the City of Hamilton adopt as an integral part of their Final West Harbour Waterfront Recreational Master (WHRM) Plan:

1. The Guiding Principles of the Hamilton Waterfront Trust's Plan, as outlined in this report above, and the additional guiding principles recommended by the Chamber's Waterfront Taskforce for the redevelopment and revitalization of the West Harbour; namely:
  - Integrating existing business/operations/facilities/ investments to their full value;
  - Encourage efficient use of tax money and private capital (tax dollars on large scale infrastructure projects);
  - Ensure that all proposed operations (residential, marina, clubs, commercial) fall within a long term sustainable, competitively priced business model;
  - Ensure that boating organizations are provided with or will continue to have access to all necessary facilities which make them viable including buildings and parking, dock, shoreline, winter and summer on land storage including dry sail;
  - Any plan for the West Harbour must be carefully planned so as to minimize adverse unacceptable impact on the neighbouring residential community;
  - Recognize and protect the investments made and the value created by the stakeholder's over the years. In addition there should be an acknowledgement of the stakeholder's contributions to the ongoing improvements in the West Harbour;
  - West Harbour Development should supports the revitalization of the Downtown and the Hamilton Waterfront Trust's Plan is an excellent opportunity to 'transform' the waterfront appropriately in that regard;
  - There should be improved connections, including, but not limited to Public Transit, between the Harbour and the Downtown area;
  - The West Harbour should be an attraction area rather than merely a passive recreational area;
  - There needs to be diversity as well as balance for the Waterfront; and
  - While the plan needs to be visionary and long-term in its planning horizon, the plan should be sensitive to long established waterfront uses and feasible transitions must be developed.
2. Continued effective dialogue with the Hamilton Chamber of Commerce, the Hamilton Waterfront Trust, and all other stakeholders throughout the process.

**Next Steps:**

Recommend that the planning process be brought to a conclusion in a cost effective manner.

That the input of the stakeholders be incorporated into the plan

Specifically determine the status of the Consultant activity, changes made since last presentations to stakeholders and go forward plans of the consultants.

Encourage the HWT to modify its Plan to include the above guiding principles and additional stakeholder input.

Ensure that the HWT plan is fairly evaluated by City Staff and City Council as a cost effective and stakeholder friendly option to the consultant's concept plan.

**Alignment with Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan:**

Goal #3 of the Chamber of Commerce Strategic Plan is "Advocacy"

*To act as the "Voice of Hamilton Business" through effective advocacy to all levels of government, and in the public media, giving special attention to Municipal Affairs, by monitoring public policy and community development, thereby promoting and supporting Economic Development opportunities that will encourage investment, attract new business, and create jobs – all to provide the foundation of a sustainable and vibrant business community.*

This report focuses on the issue of community revitalization and economic development. In order to implement the above goal, the Chamber is to provide "*strong leadership with respect to economic development to ensure the continued prosperity of our community*". This report is in alignment with the goals and objectives of the Chamber's strategic plan.

Submitted by,

Bruce Youngblud, Chair  
Waterfront Revitalization Task Force