April 5, 2019

Dear Ms. Shanks,

Plantel Consulting Inc. is proud to present this Tourism Management Plan for Grimsby Beach. This project has been carried out in accordance with our work plan and budget, as discussed and agreed upon with Town of Grimsby Staff.

Our team was able to use feedback from consultation with Grimsby Beach residents to provide recommendations to benefit Grimsby Beach in its entirety. Our recommendations are divided into five main categories: parking and traffic, resident responsibility, wayfinding, natural preservation, and open space maintenance and improvements. We believe that these recommendations will help to create a path to balancing the needs of residents and tourists in the Grimsby Beach Neighbourhood.

Plantel would like to thank Town of Grimsby Staff and Grimsby Beach residents who participated in the consultation for their time, efforts and support throughout this project. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the final deliverable, please don’t hesitate to contact me directly at (905)-921-9978 or plantelconsulting@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Paul Cech, Project Manager
Plantel Consulting Inc.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Town of Grimsby
Amy Shanks, Senior Planner
Janice Hogg, Senior Planner

Firstly, we would like to thank our client, the Town of Grimsby, for providing us with the opportunity to submit an RFP for the Grimsby Beach Tourism Management Plan and providing staff to communicate efficiently and provide support throughout the project. Specifically, we would like to thank Amy Shanks and Janice Hogg for guiding us through the consultation with Grimsby Beach residents.

The Grimsby Beach Residents Association

Secondly, Plantel would like to thank the Grimsby Beach residents who attended and participated in our consultation. Their feedback was extremely crucial and beneficial to drafting the Tourism Management Plan.

University of Waterloo
Dr. Kevin Curtis, Professor
Dr. John Lewis, Project Mentor

Lastly, we would like to thank our faculty mentor, Dr. John Lewis, for meeting with us to provide feedback and direction for our Tourism Management Plan. His assistance and expert knowledge were helpful for drafting the Plan. Additionally, Plantel would like to thank our professor, Kevin Curtis, for providing us with this unique opportunity that assisted with developing our public consultation, team management, and writing skills.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

| 01 | EXECUTIVE SUMMARY |
| 02 | VISION & INTRODUCTION |
| 03 | BEST PRACTICES REVIEW |
| 05 | LAND USE PLANNING FRAMEWORK |
| 10 | APPROACH |
| 12 | NEIGHBOURHOOD SITE ANALYSIS |
| 14 | PUBLIC CONSULTATION |
| 15 | RECOMMENDATIONS |
| 19 | APPENDICES |
  | A - What We Heard Report |
  | B - References |
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following Tourism Management Plan and Report will address long-term and short-term measures for effective tourism management in the Grimsby Beach neighbourhood. Specifically, topics that have been explored in this plan include opportunities and constraints related to natural and cultural heritage, wayfinding, traffic management, open space maintenance and mobility options.

The objective of this plan is to identify opportunities and constraints related to the management of tourism, while being sensitive to resident needs. The rapid population change projected for the Town is indicative of a need to comprehensively assess the needs of existing residents while exploring options to effectively mitigate challenges related to tourism. A review of best practices in Niagara-on-the-Lake in Ontario, Juneau in Alaska and the Chautauqua Institute in New York informs the framework used in assessing tourism management for Grimsby Beach.

An analysis of provincial and municipal policy informs the larger legislative framework within which the Town of Grimsby operates. In particular, this report is in conformity with the Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, Ontario Heritage Act, in addition to locally significant legislation and regulations such as the Town of Grimsby Official Plan, Zoning by-laws, Conservation Management Plan and Heritage Landscape Report.

Identified in the What We Heard Public Consultation Report were the key themes of:

1. Parking/traffic
2. Resident responsibility
3. Wayfinding
4. Natural preservation
5. Open space maintenance and improvements

A series of recommendations are made that reflect these themes as well as the policy framework in place and best practices from other communities. These include further studies that will lead to a shift towards pedestrianization in the neighbourhood to address the impacts of traffic, as well as the implementation of a system of wayfinding and informational signage that will assist visitors in experiencing the neighbourhood. Further recommendations also address methods to preserve and enhance the natural heritage features and open spaces found in the neighbourhood for future generations. Finally, it is recognized that periodic monitoring as well as future stakeholder engagement will form key components of managing tourism in this neighbourhood well into the future.
VISION & INTRODUCTION

OUR VISION

To set forth a series of objectives and recommendations that carefully balance the goals of maintaining the quality of life of residents in Grimsby Beach neighbourhood and the desire of visitors to witness the unique architecture found in the neighbourhood, while preserving the authenticity and sense of place derived from the architectural and cultural heritage.

WHERE IT BEGINS

The Town of Grimsby has been a destination for tourists since the 1850s, and is now a starting point for wine tours in the Niagara region. Grimsby is one of the fastest growing communities in Ontario as it grew over 8% between 2011 and 2016. This rapid change is indicative of a need to comprehensively understand needs of existing residents while exploring options to foster a welcoming environment for new residents as well. The purpose of this background study is to develop a tourism management plan for Grimsby Beach, to analyze the aesthetic presented by the cultural heritage landscape while reviewing constraints and opportunities improvement for managing tourism.

In this report, an ecological approach is utilized to ensure the sustainable use and development of the waterfront from a recreational perspective. The risk of erosion and flooding, as well as the preservation of existing naturalized areas, and the protection of properties of cultural heritage value is key to this report. There is also a recognition that tourism does not stop at the boundaries of the Grimsby Beach area, rather, it can trickle in and out of the community.

GUIDING OBJECTIVES

Low Impact Tourism
Create space for tourism with minimal impact to resident usage, built form and infrastructure

Local Community
Expand upon the already existing local community of Grimsby Beach by providing opportunities for residents to engage with one another

Historical Preservation
Preserve the historical features of the area ranging from unique buildings and architectural features, to trees, vistas, and landscape features

Wayfinding
Ensure adequate design of signage and wayfinding for the purpose of enhancing accessibility while managing current levels of residential and tourist traffic throughout the neighbourhood
Niagara-on-the-Lake Old Town and Dock Area Management Plan, 2009

Niagara-on-the-Lake has established a Vision and Secondary Plan for their Old Town and Dock Area to aid in tourism management. This document utilizes stakeholder workshops and public engagement processes to develop a twenty-year vision for the Old Town. The strategy of the plan focuses on providing detailed policy to guide decision making and manage change through use of feedback provided by the local stakeholders.

The plan outlines two main factors that are promoting the success of the Old Town & Dock Area which are the developments and improvements to infrastructure and the marketing of location for tourism. The infrastructure improvements include items such as welcome centres, pedestrian walkway and access upgrades, renovation of existing architectural features such as the three pedestrian bridges throughout Niagara Falls. The investments into marketing have provided the area with a cohesive brand which highlights the unique features that are present. In addition, the marketing also gives attention to the local businesses and amenities to expand relationships throughout the area. The strategy of marketing has the potential to be used in Grimsby Beach to control the access, wayfinding, and overall management of tourism and tourists as they work their way through the community.

Stakeholder sessions carried out as part of the Old Town & Dock Area Plan provided background on a plethora of issues and opportunities that were present. This interactive discussion gave insightful, actionable feedback to the Town of Niagara. Discussions in this way are a great way to engage with the local residents and allow them to contribute to the management of their community. With a historical neighbourhood that is privately owned as in Grimsby Beach, it is paramount that there is strong integration between the Town and the community members to ensure the members’ vision of their community can come to fruition with the help of the Town.

Chautauqua Institution, New York, 2019

The Chautauqua Institution in New York is a not-for-profit organization that focuses on the preservation of the history of Chautauqua and the institution lands – which share similarities with the Grimsby Beach environment. It is governed by a board of trustees of whom are elected property owners within the institution lands. The board establishes policies and directions for the area and the elected members are responsible for the operation of the institution lands and facilities. The board also establishes long-term strategic plans for future development and management of the lands.

The board of trustees meet approximately five times year, usually once a season and twice in the summer, to discuss the future of the Institution, upcoming policy reforms, and to oversee the operations. Each member of the board has a role managing committees such as Marketing and Brand Strategy or Nominating and Governance. The board members work with community members to create a cohesive vision and plan for the future of the Institution lands and aim to create an interface between the community and the local policy.

To create such expansive and involved communities the Institution holds a variety of lectures, performance arts, and other creative and provocative activities that promote the exploration of human values and the enrichment of life. The community works in tandem with the Institution and the board to promote environmental stewardship and overall preservation of the Chautauqua landscape. For instance, the Institution is able to control 100 percent of the stormwater runoff from its land and directs and recycles this water in environmentally friendly ways that preserve the quality of Chautauqua Lake. These activities coupled with other community and institution-based initiatives bring the Chautauqua community together and creates opportunities to build new and stronger relationships between community members.
LEARNING FROM PRECEDENCE

Juneau, Alaska Tourism Management Plan, 2002

The City of Juneau, Alaska, has created a Draft Tourism Management Plan to manage rapid cruise tourism growth and destination travel and to ensure that residents feel “in control” of the future of their community. The goal of this Plan is to reap the social, economic, and environmental benefits of tourism while minimizing costs and providing a welcoming environment for visitors. This Plan entails stakeholder consultation, community member interviews, and online polls for all residents. With a population of approximately 30,000 residents, Juneau is comparable to Grimsby in size and composition, especially with regards to its natural and cultural heritage tourism concerns.

Initial stakeholder consultations outlined that the travel segment was underdeveloped and should be directed to grow significantly with appropriate management, as set out in the Tourism Management Plan. Though Grimsby’s residents wish to keep tourism as is and not expand it, some of Juneau’s recommendations for impact management, including parking and pedestrian issues can be applied similarly to Grimsby. Impact management recommendations are outlined within the Plan to shape how the City of Juneau will likely look over time. For example, one of the recommendations is to provide a “park and ride” program, where tourists park their car at a set location and have a shuttle service bring them to their destination. The tourists are able to travel by foot around the area, rather than either driving through and causing traffic issues, or having to find a parking space. Having this recommendation utilized within Grimsby would be supported by the residents since they noted they would like more tourists traveling through the area on foot rather than in a vehicle.

The Plan also provides recommendations for recreational resources such as trails and access points. Although Juneau has a much more detailed trails system than Grimsby, the recommendations can be scaled down and utilized within Grimsby. Juneau aims to maintain its cultural heritage and ecological health, much like Grimsby. To do this, Juneau has noted the need for sustainable tourism activities. Additionally, Juneau has opted in to revitalizing its waterfront area for both residents and tourists. With a few plans and projects currently underway, the main objective is to balance the desires of the community to enjoy its waterfront with the needs of the tourist sector. Much like Juneau, Grimsby is faced with conflicting interests between the local residents and tourists that it needs to address.
LAND USE PLANNING
FRAMEWORK

PROVINCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Planning Act, 1990

Analysis of provincial policy will inform the larger legislative framework within which the Town of Grimsby operates. Section 2(d) of the Planning Act recognizes historic resources of historical and architectural significance to be of provincial interest (Government of Ontario, 1990). Other matters of provincial interest as outlined in Section 2 include the minimization of waste, facilitation of accessibility for diverse members of the public, and pedestrian-oriented development (Government of Ontario, 1990). The recommendations in this report are consistent with this section of the Act and recognize the value of maintaining architectural fabric in the Beach community, while providing accessible and safe public spaces.

Provincial Policy Statement, 2014

Section 1.7.1 of the Provincial Policy Statement guides long-term economic prosperity of municipalities through providing sustainable tourism development (Government of Ontario, 2014). Section 1.8.1 supports energy efficiency and climate change adapted land development that promotes active transportation. This report is consistent with these principles as it reviews methods in which wayfinding and neighbourhood site development can encourage healthy lifestyles and behaviours, while managing tourism.

Section 2.6.1 of the Provincial Policy Statement encourages that “significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved” (Government of Ontario, 2014). The Grimsby Beach Heritage Landscape is a significant and important part of the Town’s identity. As detailed in further sections of this report, the Chautauqua buildings’ unique architectural style and the juxtaposition of buildings in proximity to natural heritage features provides for the status of significance in the Town. The projected growth in the community is also another matter of heritage concern as this may pose increasing challenges with the retention of landscape features. The recommendations made in this report are consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement and the retention of significant cultural heritage landscapes.

Ontario Heritage Act, 1990

The Ontario Heritage Act is the principal legislation that guides protection for heritage buildings in Ontario (Government of Ontario, 1990). Section 2(b) of the Ontario Heritage Act prescribes jurisdictional discretion over heritage standards and guidelines to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The Ministry has various guidelines to ensure the adequate retention and protection of heritage properties. Further, Section 27(1) ensures that municipalities maintain a register of properties of architectural or heritage value.

Regulation 9/06 is utilized for evaluating heritage potential of properties intended to be designated under Part IV of the Act; however, this regulation can also be used as a method of understanding the categorization of heritage value of properties in the Grimsby Beach landscape. For instance, the Chautauqua-style houses may not retain early architecture from the mid-1850s, but they are reminiscent of that time in history and can satisfy the criteria of creativity called for in design/physical value, Section 1. Undoubtedly, the landscape as a whole can satisfy the second criteria of historical and associative value as the properties have the potential to yield information about the Methodist Chautauqua movement. It can also be argued that the beach landscape and tourism opportunities can satisfy the third criteria as well. Overall, this report is consistent with principles outlined in the Ontario Heritage Act.
The subject lands are designated as “Grimsby Beach” as identified on Schedule D. Grimsby Beach is identified as being within an “Urban Settlement Area Boundary” (Schedule D). The residential lands within Grimsby Beach are designated as “Low Density Residential Area” with a few spaces designated as “Parks and Open Space”. The waterfront is designated as “Environmental Conservation Area” as identified on Schedule B-2: Land Use - Urban Settlement Area (East).

The purpose of the Low Density Residential Area designation is to “protect and enhance the existing character of Grimsby’s neighbourhoods while, at the same time, permit some forms of development or redevelopment that is compatible with existing development” (Section 3.4). Additionally, development or redevelopment should “improve the quality of life of existing and future residents of Grimsby” (Section 3.4). One of the main objectives for Residential Areas is to “protect and enhance the character and image of existing residential neighbourhoods” (Section 3.4).

The purpose and intent of the Parks and Open Space designation is for the Town to promote active and healthy lifestyles for residents. In the future, the Town would like to expand and improve the current trail network (Section 3.8).

Within Grimsby Beach, there is one main trail along the waterfront which this Tourism Management Plan outlines to improve the facilities along it for better use. One of the goals is to ensure that “privacy and security impacts of the trails network on abutting residential areas can be mitigated” (Section 3.8). During the stakeholder workshop, we found that there were concerns with tourists on private property and therefore, we provide recommendations within this Plan to ensure private property is not disturbed.

Within the “Environmental Conservation Area” along the Grimsby Beach waterfront, the Town has outlined that an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) must be submitted in order to make any site alterations to the lands. We have not provided any recommendations for altering the Environmental Conservation Area lands.

One of the goals for the Cultural Heritage and Archaeology of the Town is to “encourage and develop private and public financial resources and techniques in the preservation, restoration, and utilization of heritage resources, particularly in the Downtown District and the Grimsby Beach Neighbourhood” (Section 8.0). General policies include preserving buildings or sites with historical significance and protecting heritage sites through heritage designation.

Active transportation policies within the Town of Grimsby Official Plan are intended to improve pedestrian and bicycle accessibility (Section 5.6). The long-term goal of Grimsby’s active transportation network is to include public transportation. Schedule C defines the proposed transportation and trails routes. A bike route and waterfront trail route are both located along Lake Street within the Grimsby Beach area.
LAND USE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

MUNICIPAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Zoning By-law No. 14-15

The Grimsby Zoning By-law No. 14-15 establishes a distinct zoning code for Grimsby Beach. This zoning designation allows for a limited scope of uses, and accounts for the majority of properties within the Study Area. The BG zone allows for only a few small scale residential uses, including single-detached dwellings, group homes, and bed and breakfasts. This designation will serve to preserve the existing residential character and scale of the neighbourhood, and ensure that the existing tourism features are not compromised by excessive development going forward.

Additionally, the area’s three predominant open spaces (Bell Park, Auditorium Circle, and Grimsby Beach Park) are zoned Public Open Space (O2). The O2 zone allows for a number of recreational and community uses. The tourism management plan will explore the use of these park spaces to provide improved access to information and amenity to serve both residents and visitors to the Grimsby Beach Area.

There is also one parcel of land zoned Community Commercial (CC) which contains a number of small scale businesses which serve the immediate community. These land uses do not conflict with or interfere the surrounding residential uses, and comprise only a small portion of the study area.

The vision of this Tourism management plan will pull primarily from other documents such as the Official Plan, however this land use framework will be drawn upon to ensure that Grimsby Beach retains and improves upon its existing residential characteristics while better accommodating its current levels of tourism.

Conservation Management Plan, 2017

A Conservation Management Plan was created for Grimsby Beach in 2017 to determine issues related to the Grimsby Beach area, including deterioration of the green space and waterfront, the threat of development, and the impact of tourists. Through conducting resident interviews, having an online survey available, and investigating archival documents, the Conservation Management Plan outlines the important heritage and natural features within Grimsby Beach. Each of the issues have been evaluated based on future needs, resources, opportunities, constraints, and conditions. For example, the issue of the threat of development includes the growing interest in waterfront properties. The pressure of turning single detached houses along the Lake Ontario shoreline into condominium buildings has arisen around Lake Ontario and threatens neighbouring areas to Grimsby Beach and also Grimsby Beach. The Conservation Management Plan suggests that the conservation approach to Grimsby Beach should be preservation, which is maintaining a site as is.

Policies and recommendations are provided based on the findings from the interviews, online surveys, and archival documents which are broken down into sections including retaining natural values, retaining social values, and retaining aesthetic values. For retaining natural values, the Conservation Management Plan recommends establishing a tree inventory and neighbourhood tree management plan. Once a tree inventory plan is created, it could include further policies to improve existing trees and expand the tree canopy. Another recommendation is the use of technology to prevent beach erosion. With this, armour stone is identified as the most appropriate protection structure for the existing conditions.

For retaining social values, recommendations include the creation of a Grimsby Beach Advisory Committee to provide input to the Town’s Planning Department regarding local significant issues such as heritage and tourism. Additionally, the creation of a community communications hub would help keep residents informed about events and other important matters related to Grimsby Beach residents. Plantel’s work on the Grimsby Beach Tourism Management Plan has derived from the recommendation within the Conservation Management Plan to increase signage for interpretation and wayfinding.
LAND USE PLANNING FRAMEWORK

MUNICIPAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

Conservation Management Plan, 2017 (Cont’d)

To support the 2014 Provincial Policy Statements designation of Grimsby Beach as a Cultural Heritage Landscape, the Plan outlines that the zone standards indicated in the Town’s Zoning By-law for Grimsby Beach (zoned BG) should be maintained. Additionally, one suggestion is to create a buffer zone around the protected area for controlling height of future development. Another recommendation is to maintain the existing street patterns within Grimsby Beach since these trace back to the original 1850’s Chautauqua Methodist Camp street patterns.

Cultural Heritage Landscape Report, 2015

The Town of Grimsby’s Cultural Heritage Landscape Report titled “Grimsby’s Special Places” was drafted in January of 2015. The report provides an in-depth overview of preliminary strategies for the conservation of heritage properties. The Methodist campground community (c. 1859) pre-dated the original New York Station Chatauqua. Features of the landscape include small lots, enveloped by narrow lanes, unique cottages and open spaces centred around a former temple that was later demolished. An interesting piece of information that was derived from the report was that the neighbourhood was highly religious and the campgrounds were utilized as a gathering space throughout long winters to share stories.

Indeed, the Grimsby Beach Heritage Landscape can be classified as a special place in Grimsby and in southern Ontario. It is anticipated that the popularity of this landscape will increase. Information derived from this report have been incorporated into analysis and recommendations made relating to providing informational signage.

Niagara Region Transportation Master Plan, 2017

Apart from the Grimsby Official Plan, the other transportation related policy that is applicable to the Grimsby Beach neighbourhood is the Niagara Region Transportation Master Plan (TMP), How We Go (Niagara Region, 2017a). Since it is a high-level, regional TMP, this TMP does not have any provisions that specifically deal with the Grimsby Beach Neighbourhood. However, there are some overarching themes that are worth mentioning for their relevance to this plan.

How We Go is guided by a set of goals, several of which are particularly relevant to this plan:

02. Support economic development
The transportation network will support the efficient movement of goods, provide adequate connections to support the tourism industry, and provide high-quality access to employment for all residents.

04. Improve options for sustainable modes of transportation
A balance between modes will be achieved, minimizing the need for new infrastructure and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

05. Promote the development of healthy communities
The TMP will support and promote active transportation options for all network users.
It is important to note that while the TMP promotes balancing the needs of all modes, it also specifically promotes active transportation as a key strategy to achieve healthier, safer communities.

The TMP also includes a discussion on transit (Niagara Region, 2017b) and cycling (Niagara Region, 2017c). With respect to regional transit, Niagara Region is planning for bus connections to Grimsby GO Station from Smithville by 2021, and from St. Catherines by 2031. While these connections are important, there would still be a need to connect the GO Station to the neighbourhood in some fashion to make these a feasible way for tourists to travel to Grimsby Beach.

In terms of cycling infrastructure, there are no plans by the Region to expand cycling infrastructure within the area around Grimsby Beach beyond the existing trail already in place.

An important component of Niagara Region’s Transportation Master Plan is the Bikeway Identification and Destination Wayfinding Signage for Cyclists report. Guidelines outlined in this report are specific to cycling signage, supporting three main categories of cycling trips, including:

**Utilitarian or destination-oriented trips:** repetitive trips for the purpose of reaching a destination, including trips to places to employment, school or shops

**Recreational trips:** for enjoyment, scenery and company of other cyclists

**Touring trips:** longer than utilitarian or recreational trips made between urban areas to points of specific interest

The overarching purpose of the wayfinding guidelines is to provide a best practice approach to bicycle wayfinding signage in Niagara Region. Detailed guidelines include eligibility criteria for wayfinding signage, sign types, sign designs, signs sizes and installation metrics. The scope of the plan includes bikeway signage for trails and on-road facilities, including how cycling signage will be implemented with conflicting road signage. The Bikeway Identification and Destination Wayfinding Signage for Cyclists reflects the goals and priorities of the How We Go Transportation Master Plan. This plan as has implications on new and existing cycling wayfinding signage within Grimsby Beach, particularly along Lake Street, where dedicated and sharrow bike lanes exist.
This Tourism Management Plan is part of a larger, potential Heritage Conservation District review for the Grimsby Beach Cultural Heritage Landscape. There is ample evidence in regards to the effectiveness and necessity of managing tourism within heritage significant communities, as evidenced in the review of other tourism management plans. As such, Plantel has established an evidence-based methodology that highlights the objectives set out at the beginning of this report. Specifically, this method aims to balance the goals of maintaining the quality of life of residents in Grimsby Beach neighbourhood and the desire to preserve the authenticity and sense of place derived from this architectural and cultural heritage.

An assessment of best practice sources in communities across North America, including the Cities of Juneau, Niagara-on-the-Lake, and New York, have provided a breadth of information regarding what priorities and opportunities can be derived within a Tourism Management Plan. Further, legislative frameworks within the Province of Ontario (e.g. Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement, Ontario Heritage Act) and the Town of Grimsby (Official Plan, Zoning By-laws, guiding documents) integrates matters of importance for the neighbourhood.

A vital source of primary, qualitative data was garnered from consultation with residents in the neighbourhood. As illustrated in the What We Heard report (refer to Appendix A), an analysis of diverse needs of stakeholders that live within the community is valuable and informative.

Identified in this report were the key themes of:

01 Parking and traffic
02 Resident responsibility
03 Wayfinding
04 Natural preservation
05 Open space maintenance and improvements
WAYFINDING

Through conversation with members of the Homeowners Association and Town staff, the lack of a wayfinding plan emerged as a prevailing theme. This also ties closely into issues surrounding parking and traffic, and resident responsibility. As noted previously, residents of Grimsby Beach have had ongoing issues with visitors driving through the community looking for the painted houses, parks, plaques, beach, and other destinations. This is largely driven by the lack of wayfinding signage in the community. Currently, visitors to the Grimsby Beach area have few signs which leads to unclear demarcation between public and private property, appropriate areas for parking and areas of interest. The lack of abundant wayfinding induces confusion for visitors and disturbance for residents.

Recommendations

There are several areas of opportunity to introduce new wayfinding within the perimeter of the Grimsby Beach and inside the study area. These include major and minor wayfinding signs, as shown in the wayfinding map here. Major wayfinding signs are larger in size and positioned along arterial roads leading into the community. These signs will be designed to indicate to drivers that the heritage features and potential conservation district are nearby and direct automobile traffic to the right place. Only two of this sign variety are proposed in order to direct incoming traffic from the QEW and eastbound on Lake Street. Minor wayfinding signs will be implemented more consistently within the study area in order to direct tourists to individual destinations such as parking areas, Auditorium Circle, beach, and public open spaces. This signage will be primarily pedestrian oriented, to encourage tourists to walk the community, however it will be eligible for motorists as well. The implementation of a wayfinding plan will help to eliminate the existing tourism related conflicts discussed in the report, and help to create a more cohesive experience for residents and tourists alike.
NEIGHBOURHOOD
SITE ANALYSIS

MOBILE OPPORTUNITIES
AND CONSTRAINTS

A product of its past, the Grimsby Beach neighbourhood is characterized by narrow right of ways that often feature single-lane roads and one way streets. Mature trees, fences, and even a few buildings are often found close to the curb edge. This means that the ability to widen the right of way is in many cases limited or non-existent. As a result, most of the streets do not have sidewalks, and are shared between tourists and residents, as well as between pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles. This creates competition for a limited resource along multiple dimensions, each of which needs to be managed as part of a successful tourist management strategy.

The images that follow, taken at Auditorium Circle, provide a sense of the challenge inherent to this. What can be seen here is a vehicle that enters Auditorium Circle (1) and proceeds to the first set of painted houses (2). After taking some photographs, the vehicle then proceeds to the next set of houses (3), where it again stops for some photographs (4). This is repeated again for a third time (5) at the last house (6) before the vehicle exits the court (7).

Vehicles that stop for photographs also stop any vehicles behind them, including those of other tourists as well as those of residents. For residents, this becomes an irritating exercise to go through on a frequent basis. Other activities that impact residents include speeding vehicles, as well as vehicles driving the wrong way down one-way streets.

It needs to be acknowledged here that there is a perceived priority on the roadway of the vehicle over cyclists or pedestrians that is a result of socio-cultural norms as well as traditional road design. Particularly within the context of a neighbourhood with narrow roads, such as Grimsby Beach, this can create a sense of an unsafe environment for pedestrians and cyclists who encounter a moving vehicle on such a roadway.
NEIGHBOURHOOD
SITE ANALYSIS

PARKING

Parking is another challenge in this neighbourhood. As shown in the images to the right, on-street parking is forbidden, and what parking exists is unsigned and limited in quantity. It is probable that this contributes to the drive-through tourism that was described earlier, as tourists who wish to see the neighbourhood but cannot find a place to leave their vehicle may resort to driving through the neighbourhood instead.

TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

There are currently few viable alternatives to driving to the neighbourhood. A GO station is anticipated to eventually be built in downtown Grimsby. However, Grimsby does not currently have a public transit system, and Niagara Region does not currently service Grimsby with its regional transit service, so there is no way to take transit into the neighbourhood, including possible trip connections from a future GO Station. The area is serviced by a bike route, however, the local cycling network is a work in progress and does not yet have an ideal level of connectedness.

One of the most popular non-auto ways to visit the area is with a tour bus. According to residents, these buses park outside of the neighbourhood, and tourists walk around the neighbourhood. During consultation, residents indicated a strong preference for tourists to experience their neighbourhood in this manner, on foot rather than in a vehicle. Tour bus operators are an important stakeholder in future consultation for this neighbourhood.

EXISTING TOURISM ACTIVITIES

There is also a tour of the neighbourhood conducted by a local museum. Unlike the above tour buses, the museum’s vehicle enters the neighbourhood. Residents indicated that the use of a megaphone by tour guides on this vehicle creates a significant amount of unwanted noise, especially during early morning or late evening tours.
On **February 28, 2019**, Plantel Consulting facilitated a public consultation activity with the Grimsby Beach Residents Association who were invited to share their lived experiences of tourism in the area.

The Activity was designed to identify key issues and opportunities which could be addressed and highlighted within the Plan. Participants were split into groups of three and were provided with maps of the neighbourhood. Each group, along with one member of Plantel Consulting, worked to identify areas where they have experienced issues with tourism, areas they like, and areas where they think improvements could be made. Facilitators were present to guide discussion and ensure it remained on topic, however, they did not make any suggestions or recommendations which may have skewed the feedback given by homeowners. It is worth noting that, while this activity was intended to be primarily mapping, it was also very conversational and much of the valuable feedback was provided verbally and recorded by members of the project team. A brief discussion was held after the activity to compare the work of both groups and ensure everyone had a chance to say what they needed.

Feedback between the two stakeholder groups was predominantly consistent among the two groups. The wrap up discussion revealed that each member of the stakeholder group shared many of the same opinions and experiences related to tourism. Though these were only the experiences of 6 people, the consistency does provide a solid base to build upon and ensures that the feedback received is representative of more than an individual’s experiences.

A detailed report about what we heard at the consultation can be found in Appendix A.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been garnered through analysis of various sources of information. To guide analysis, an in-depth assessment of planning and legislative frameworks has provided an understanding of what principles are integral to the Town of Grimsby, and what objectives are required to be reviewed by the Province of Ontario.

MANAGING TOURISM TRAFFIC

One of the objectives in this plan is to create space for tourism with minimal impact to residents. In order to do this, it is important to understand the degree of impact that tourism currently has on the neighbourhood. Using resident input as well as information from other plans, it is possible to rank each type of tourism across various dimensions, as is shown in the following table.

It is important to remember that this ranking factors in volume of usage, and, as such, is not static across time. For instance, during consultation, residents were already concerned about tourists wandering on to, or parking on, their property. Experience elsewhere suggests that as the number of tourists increases, so do instances of tourists using private property. Trade-offs can be observed in encouraging other modes, such as in having tourists park their cars and walking the neighbourhood. While this reduces the traffic, noise and safety impacts of cars as less cars drive through the neighbourhood, it also increases the likelihood of trash being left on the ground and tourists walking on to private property as they wander around.

From here, it is possible to develop recommendations based on an exclude-accommodate paradigm, as shown in the graphic below. A use is accommodated if improvements are made in policy or to the neighbourhood to support it, such as the addition of sidewalks and garbage cans to support tourists walking the neighbourhood. A use is excluded if there are additions to policy or the neighbourhood that hinder this use, such as a ban on street parking to deter cars. A hybrid of these can occur when the exclusion or accommodation is limited in nature, such as a seasonal ban on parking. This paradigm also recognizes that appropriate interventions can change across time as conditions change, which may necessitate moving from (for instance) a purely accommodational approach to more of a hybrid one.

The following table describes the recommendations that are believed to be the most appropriate actions with regards to the various types of visitors to Grimsby Beach.

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<th>Traffic</th>
<th>Noise</th>
<th>Trash</th>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Air Quality</th>
<th>Trespassing</th>
<th>Overall</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>None</td>
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<tr>
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<td>High</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RECOMMENDATIONS

The table below describes the recommendations that are believed to be the most appropriate actions with regards to the various types of visitors to Grimsby Beach.

### USE

#### Pedestrians & Cyclists

**Recommendation: Accommodate**

- Within the Grimsby Official Plan and all supporting plans, policies and documents, adopt a Pedestrian-First strategy for Grimsby Beach that specifically promotes for the prioritization of pedestrian and cyclist supportive infrastructure and policies in the neighbourhood.
- Initiate a Neighbourhood Pedestrianization Study that establishes flow paths and volumes of pedestrians and cyclists through the neighbourhood, and based on this data recommends concrete actions to that can be taken to improve the pedestrian and cyclist experience in Grimsby Beach.
- Work with the Grimsby Beach Residents Association and local residents to develop and pilot temporary measures to prioritize active transportation over cars in the neighbourhood, incorporating wayfinding and interpretation where appropriate. This may include:
  
  a) The introduction of bulb-outs on streets, or the dedication of off-street property where the street is too narrow, to provide refuge from vehicles to people walking on the road, as well as space for interpretive materials, maps, and other signage.
  
  b) Signage at entrances to Grimsby Beach to indicate that the neighbourhood is ‘pedestrianized,’ that is, that pedestrians are prioritized over motorized vehicles in the neighbourhood. This signage can be codified and improved through the Pedestrianization Study. Signage should be mode-oriented rather than attraction oriented, as residents have indicated that the painted houses should not be advertised.

- Establish periodic monitoring of pedestrian use of the neighbourhood to capture any changing dynamics, such as increases in trespassing. Monitoring may require additional budgetary allowance or staff time.

#### Cars

**Recommendation: Exclude**

- Initiate a Traffic Study to characterize the flow paths, speeds and volumes of vehicles through the neighbourhood during the peak summer tourist season.
- Based on the results of the Traffic Study, develop a Traffic Management Plan that aims to reduce the number of vehicles driving through the neighbourhood. Strategies may include:
  
  a) Where vehicle volumes are low enough that they could be accommodated using on-site parking, dedicate space in or around the neighbourhood for parking. Based on resident desire not to advertise the neighbourhood, this is believed to be the preferred solution.
  
  b) Where vehicle volumes can not sufficiently be accommodated in the neighbourhood, during peak tourist season, consider basing tourism off-site and providing a shuttle to the neighbourhood. A location near the proposed Grimsby GO Station may be most appropriate, as the shuttle could capture transit-based, car-based, and tour bus-based visitors.
  
  c) A mix of the two strategies.
  
  d) Signage at entrances that directs drivers to parking, which may be combined with the pedestrianization signage recommended above.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

**USE**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**Cars**

Recommendation: Exclude

- Consider establishing a seasonal bike-share service as part of a parking strategy to serve as an incentive to park rather than drive by providing visitors with more options for exploring the neighbourhood and surrounding area.
- Examine vehicle circulation through the neighbourhood to determine whether improvements could be made to the one-way streets to help naturally guide visitors in the correct direction. This may include such things as painting turn arrows on pavement, squaring curb radii in places where turns should not be made, or even reversing travel directions in certain road segments. Establish periodic monitoring of vehicular traffic in the neighbourhood to capture any changing dynamics, which may require additional budgetary allowance and staff time.

**Tour Buses**

Recommendation: Exclude

- Note that residents in Grimsby Beach are currently pleased with the way in which tour buses operate in the area and have a desire to see this arrangement continue.
- Identify tour bus operators offering visits to the neighbourhood, and establish ongoing dialogue and a positive working relationship with these operators, including the inclusion of operators as stakeholders in future work that impacts their operation in this location.
- Formalize a location for buses to park at an appropriate location outside of the neighbourhood. Should something like off-site parking and a shuttle service be identified as the preferred method to address car traffic, the Town should consider combining tour bus parking with car parking.

**Guided Tours**

Recommendation: Hybrid

- Identify and engage guided tour operators as stakeholders in future work that impacts their operation, recognizing that guided tours fulfill important functions found in other sections of this Plan, including reducing car traffic and providing interpretive services to visitors. Through agreement, by-law, or other means, establish neighbourhood-sensitive operating parameters for guided tours that find a balance between the important function of tour guides, and the desire for a tranquil neighbourhood by residents. These parameters may include, but are not limited to:
  a) Noise restrictions  
  b) Frequency of operation  
  c) Hours of operation  
  d) Number of guided tour operations  
  e) Vehicle types and sizes  
  f) Size of tour groups
It should be noted that some of the changes mentioned above may have secondary impacts that may require the input of additional stakeholders. One particularly important impact is that of introducing elements, including bulb-outs and speed bumps, into the right of way to discourage vehicle use and/or slow vehicles down in the neighbourhood. While this approach may successfully reduce the amount of visiting vehicle traffic, it may also hinder street cleaning, winter maintenance, waste pick-up and emergency response.

Another secondary impact, alluded to previously, is that as visitors are encouraged to walk/bike rather than drive through the neighbourhood, instances of trespassing and trash build up may increase. Therefore, it is important to revisit the strategy for this neighbourhood periodically to ensure that it is still appropriate, and adjust when and where necessary.

Grimsby residents have indicated that they often assume the role of disseminating historical information regarding their neighbourhood. To alleviate this pressure, the following recommendations are made to delineate between public and private space, in recognition of residents’ need for additional privacy.

**Recommendation #1: Education**

To disseminate information about the Grimsby Beach neighbourhood, a primary recommendation that can be made is to foster education surrounding the area’s history. For instance, an outdoor display board with brochures can provide for an opportunity to inform tourists about the Beach’s Chautauqua history.

This cost-effective method of disseminating information will provide for reduced tensions between residents and tourists, while guiding tourists to contact the Town of Grimsby for further information about this celebrated history (Displays2Go, n.d.).

**Recommendation #2: Signage**

In contrast to wayfinding signage, the proposed signage for the Grimsby Beach community will indicate that the brightly coloured cottages are homes first, and a heritage resource second.

The signage could state, specifically, for instance: “This cottage is a home. Thank you for respecting private property” (see Signs of the Mountains, n.d.).

Maintenance and improvement of public spaces was a prominent topic of discussion during the consultation session. Issues within these spaces affect the quality of life, movement, and safety for residents and tourists.

The recommendations listed in this section represent the public feedback and may require higher standards of liability, increased budgets and/or staffing to fulfill the recommendations.

**Recommendation #1: Monitoring**

It is recommended that an observation and monitoring program be initiated within Grimsby Beach. This monitoring program can be done by both residents and Town staff in order to ensure that when issues are observed they can be remediated immediately. Working in tandem with the residents would be a monitoring program by the Town. There are already garbage receptacles throughout Grimsby Beach that are serviced by the Town. As part of this servicing, a checklist could be created to monitor the state of public goods and infrastructure such as walkways and pathways. This checklist will allow the Town to know which infrastructure is in need of repairs and also which areas of Grimsby Beach are degrading faster than others. The monitoring program may require additional budgetary allowance or staff beyond the staff already visiting Grimsby Beach to ensure all areas are adequately monitored.

**Recommendation #2: Safety**

Working alongside the monitoring program would be improvements to safety throughout Grimsby Beach. Residents identified areas where safety is a concern to both tourists and residents. The two walkways down to Grimsby Beach have begun to degrade beyond acceptable levels. The walkway down to their pier has eroded and is at a steep incline. The wooden stairs down to the beach have begun to warp and become uneven. Recommendations for improvement would be to add arm rails for support and new stairs. For the walkway down to the pier, clearing the loose stone and additionally adding a support rail to one of the two sides is recommended. The rails aid those with disabilities to access the beach more easily since the current path to the pier and steps down to the beach are a steep decline.
RECOMMENDATIONS

OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS

Recommendation #2: Safety (Cont’d)

By providing these resources and taking ownership over the walkways down to the beach, the Town of Grimsby would need to create a liability agreement and insurance for the beach steps to ensure the Town is covered in the case of a lawsuit.

Recommendation #3: Feedback

Residents have a unique opportunity of being within Grimsby Beach on a daily basis. The residents are the first observer of any issues or potential issues within Grimsby Beach. Further, resident feedback would allow the residents to suggest to the Town exactly how they would prefer an issues to be addressed. A web page or ticket system should be created to submit issues, solutions, or comments and allow residents an easy method of communication to report issues to the Town. Depending on current website capabilities, the Town may be required to hold a Request For Proposal for the creation of a web-based ticketing system to allow residents to submit feedback online in an organized manner. This would require additional funding and/or budgetary requirements.

NATURAL PRESERVATION

Residents have indicated they fear losing the naturalization of the parks and beach area. With these recommendations, the Town can better preserve these natural resources.

Recommendation #1: Tree Inventory Plan

Our first recommendation for preserving the natural environment is the creation of a Tree Inventory Plan that would focus on both the park areas as well as within the residential neighbourhood. Residents at the consultation noted their concern for maintaining and replacing existing tree cover. Within the Conservation Management Plan for Grimsby Beach, the authors suggest the creation of a Tree Inventory Plan but have not provided details for the Plan. A Tree Inventory Plan would be used to map out the existing trees, including their species, diameter, and health condition. This inventory would be updated as trees die and are replaced as well to ensure the tree canopy is consistently maintained.

Recommendation #2: Planting Plan

To complement the Tree Inventory Plan, a Planting Plan could be created that would include replacement tree types and a map of where these trees would be planted. The Planting Plan would outline the timeline for planting these trees that would account for the rate of dying trees and allow time for the new trees to grow to maintain the same canopy as existing. Although we understand creating a Tree Inventory Plan and a Planting Plan may require lot of time and resources including hiring an arborist, we feel that through creating these Plans, it would help conserve the natural environment within Grimsby Beach while securing future vegetation.

Recommendation #3: Beach Management Plan

Residents have noted that the naturalized beach may become more of an attraction and cause an influx of tourists. To manage this, we recommend creating a Beach Management Plan. The Plan would address beach erosion and the best preventative measures for erosion.

Recommendation #4: Grimsby Beach Clean Up Committee

During the consultation, residents identified potential influx of tourists to the beach area, which can create additional litter. We recommend the creation of a Clean Up Committee to help address this issue. Members of this volunteer Committee could help maintain the naturalized features of the beach area and park by cleaning up litter within the space.

ADDITIONAL RESIDENT CONSULTATION

Recommendation #1: Future Consultation

Although we received very valuable feedback from the 6 members of the Grimsby Beach Residents’ Association during our consultation activity, we feel that this Plan could include more residents’ feedback. With more residents’ voices heard, it would help solidify our recommendations and findings based on the consultation activity. Additionally, further consultation might be able to address underlying issues that these specific residents were unaware of, or did not think were issues.
WHAT WE HEARD

TOURISM MANAGEMENT PLAN

STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP
BACKGROUND
In February 2019, Plantel Consulting was contracted by the Town of Grimsby to assist in creating a Tourism Management Plan for the Grimsby Beach area. The purpose of the Tourism Management Plan is multifaceted. Primarily it is intended to address the existing level of tourism and develop solutions to better facilitate non-disruptive visitation to the beach heritage area. It also will look forward to ensure long term viability, and examine what new amenities may be provided to better manage growing tourism in the area. The development of a Tourism Management Plan is a part of a larger effort by the Town of Grimsby to develop a formal Heritage Conservation District in Grimsby Beach. A stakeholder information session and workshop was held on February 28 to inform members of the Grimsby Beach Residents Association on the Towns proposed direction. Plantel Consulting attended the meeting and facilitated a workshop activity to inform the design of the Tourism Management Plan.

ACTIVITY
The Activity was designed to identify what the members of the residents association thought about tourism in Grimsby Beach, and to identify key issues and opportunities which could be addressed and highlighted within the plan. Participants were split into groups of 3 and provided with maps of the area. Each group — along with one member of the consulting team — worked to identify areas where they have experienced issues with tourism, areas they like, and areas where they think improvements could be made. Facilitators were present to guide discussion and ensure it remained on topic however they did not make any suggestions or recommendations which may have skewed the feedback given by homeowners. It is worth noting that while this activity was intended to be primarily mapping, it was also very conversational and much of the valuable feedback was provided verbally and recorded by members of the project team. A brief discussion was held after the activity to compare the work of both groups and ensure everyone had a chance to say what they needed.

Feedback between the two stakeholder groups was predominantly consistent among the two groups. The wrap up discussion revealed that each member of the stakeholder group shared many of the same opinions and experiences related to tourism. Though these were only the experiences of 6 people, the consistency does provide a solid base to build upon and ensures that the feedback received is representative of more than an individual’s experiences.

FEEDBACK SUMMARY
Feedback from this exercise dealt mostly predominantly with 5 key topics. These are listed below along with a brief discussion of the related issues which were brought to our attention. It is also noted that much of the feedback we received — while valuable — exceeds the scope of the project. This feedback will be summarized at the end, as it can be utilized for future projects in Grimsby Beach.
RESULTS AND THEMES

PARKING & TRAFFIC
Parking was the most common theme amongst the feedback results, and was a major topic of discussion among both focus groups. Primarily, this discussion centered around the lack of parking available in the area. This has become an issue as tourists who cannot find parking will often encroach onto residents parking or park illegally near the beach or on the roads. Alternatively, many tourists will drive through the community. The high traffic volume poses a risk as many of the internal streets do not have sidewalks for residents — or tourists — to walk along. This has led to many conflicts between vehicular traffic and residents. Further, regular visits from tour busses have become a nuisance, as they bring between 50 and 100 tourists a day on weekends.

It was noted that existing resources such as the nearby community centre and other town-owned properties may be utilized to remedy these issues. Desire was also expressed to further encourage visitors to walk through the community rather than drive.

RESIDENT RESPONSIBILITY
Another overarching theme of the feedback related to the current role of residents to facilitate proper tourism and educate visitors on the history. Residents noted that the lack of locally available information about the Town’s history has put much of the onus of educating visiting tourists on them, citing that it is a frequent interruption when trying to do day to day tasks. This also extends to the lack of clear delineation between public and private space as often tourists will park on or enter homeowners property to take pictures or get a better view. Currently there is a lack of clear signage to deter this type of behavior. In particular, members of the focus group noted this as being an issue for properties bordering the beach and park.

Residents noted that many of these issues stem from the perception that the Painted Ladies are historical resources first, and homes second.

It was suggested that utilizing the beach and park areas to house historical and informational resources such as a heritage walk, information kiosks, plaques, or a combination of these elements to provide accessible information to visitors. This would remove some of the onus from the current residents to act as educators and foster a more passive tourism environment.

WAYFINDING
Wayfinding was also presented as a prevalent tourism issue in the area. There are few indicators for visitors entering the area directing them to notable destinations such as the painted ladies, public parking, beach entrances, bathrooms, etc. This has led to many visitors getting lost and driving through the neighborhood looking for the attractions without proper direction. This ties closely into the issue of traffic and residential responsibility, as it is often up to residents and pedestrians to direct visitors to the various sites and is a contributing factor to the issues of illegal parking, and traffic in the community. This issue would be solved by the implementation of a formal wayfinding strategy.
NATURAL PRESERVATION
The residents group also highlighted the need for further natural preservation efforts in order to maintain the neighbourhoods integrity and character, especially in response to growing tourism. This was most commonly cited in reference to the beach, and park areas. Residents noted that if tourism grows the currently naturalized beach may become more of an attraction and be flooded with visitors. This may have adverse impacts on the integrity of the beach if it is overused going forward. Additionally there was concern over the efforts to maintain and replace existing mature tree cover in the community. Grimsby beach is home to many mature trees however there are no plans to renew these resources as they reach the end of their life cycles. These trees are present in the residential areas, but also within the parks and along the shores. As such there is the potential for much of the neighbourhoods character and history to be lost if the situation is not properly managed.

It was suggested that a beach preservation/mature tree inventory and management plan be explored, as part of this project and the designation of a Heritage Conservation District.

OPEN SPACE MAINTENANCE AND IMPROVEMENTS
Lastly, the issue of maintenance and improvement of public open spaces was discussed heavily during the exercise. These issues included the lack of lighting in park spaces, un-maintained and dangerous beach access paths, lack of programming and amenities such as bathrooms and waste receptacles. The rebuilt auditorium was also cited as an example of a potential tourism feature which has been limited by the maintenance. These issues reduce the enjoyment of these open spaces for residents, but are also exacerbated by the presence of tourism. The final Tourism Management Plan will explore recommendations for how to address these issues going forward.

OUT OF SCOPE
The following is a list of additional feedback received which falls outside of the scope of this project. This information may still be used to inform aspects of the final report, as well as other future projects.

- New aesthetically pleasing street signage, and infrastructure such as lamp posts and street lights to reflect the communities heritage;
- New hydro poles;
- Creation of community curated business to sell local goods and create a market from tourism.

CONCLUSION
Generally the results of this consultation were in line with expectations. Residents were for the most part interested more in finding effective management strategies to mitigate the impacts of the existing tourism base, rather than promoting additional tourism going forward. Though many of the suggested solutions, and improvement ideas would help to solve these issues, they do come at the risk of drawing in additional tourism. In addition to finding solutions to the problems noted by the community, this potential conflict of interest is important to consider and must also be reconciled within the Tourism Management Plan.
APPENDIX B
REFERENCES


