The Transformative Potential of Waterfront Revitalization

North Bay Waterfront Park – A Case Study

Buffalo, New York

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The City of North Bay, Ontario

- Located on the east shore of Lake Nipissing
- Population: 55,000
- Situated at the junction of Highways 11 & 17
- Known as “The Gateway to the North”
- Located 330km (210 miles) north of Toronto

Source: City of North Bay
North Bay’s Railway Heritage

- North Bay was founded as a settlement along the Canada Central Railway in 1882.

- North Bay served as a major railway hub for over a century.

- The railway yard severed downtown from Lake Nipissing.
The Decline of the Railway – an Opportunity for Transformation

- The 29 hectare (70 acre) railway lands were left vacant
- The railway corridor was reduced to 1 track

Potentials:

- Create a direct physical correction between downtown and Lake Nipissing
- Repurpose the abandoned railway station
- Create a destination waterfront park
The Master Plan

- Community-driven initiative:
  - Community Waterfront Friends
  - North Bay Heritage Gardeners
  - North Bay Heritage Railway

- Culminating in the development of a Master Plan for the overall site.
The Master Plan
The Clean Up

- The lands were contaminated with hydrocarbons, metals and other elements from over a century of railway and industrial use.

- The Master Plan provided the template for the in-situ management of contaminated soils and leachate.
Phase 1 Implementation

Connect the City to the Lake

Pedestrian Underpass
The Connection

Before

After
Phase 2 Implementation

Embark on creating the destination

- Repurpose the railway station as a museum and meeting place
- Strengthen the connection to the lake
- Add civic amenities
- Create open space to accommodate festivals and community use
- Provide parking and infrastructure
Phase 2 – Renovate and Repurpose the Railway Station

Before

After – “Discovery North Bay”
Phase 2 – Strengthen the Connections
Phase 2 – Create the Civic Centre

Civic Plaza by Day

Civic Plaza by Night
Phase 2 – Create the Civic Centre

Before

After
Phase 2 – Add Civic Amenities
Phase 2 – Create Festival Space
Phase 2 – The “Spillover” Effect

In response to the implementation of Phases 1 & 2, downtown North Bay began to “turn around” to face the waterfront.
Phase 2 – The “Spillover” Effect
Phase 2 – The “Spillover” Effect – An influx of new development

Marina Point Residence

New Transit Station
Community Mobilization

- Political motivation
- Volunteer efforts
- Community-based fundraising
Community-based Fundraising – The Pergola Project

- “Leaves” were purchased by donors in honour of someone special
- Stainless steel leaves are affixed to the pergola
- Leaves are cross-referenced to a “story” in the museum
Fundraising Potential – $1.0 million
Community vision and volunteerism continues to propel the project forward.
The Investment

Phase 1
- Site clean-up
- Underpass and infrastructure
  - $1.3 million
  - $3.0 million

Phase 2
- Civic plaza, festival area, parking lots and streetscapes
  - $5.0 million

Total Investment
- $9.3 million
The Benefits

- Anticipated spin-off spending: $4.5 - 10 million / year (CWF)
- Downtown revitalization and urban renewal
- New development on the waterfront
The Future: The Creation of a City around a Park

- Proposed Waterfront Hotel and Convention Centre
- Office buildings
- Marina Point – Phase 2 ($16 million)
The Transformation Continues...