



**PORT COLBORNE**

**Subject: Waterfront Road Allowances**

**To: Council - Public Meeting**

**From: Public Works Department**

Report Number: 2024-143

Meeting Date: July 23, 2024

---

**Recommendation:**

That Public Works Department Report 2024-143 be received; and

That Council direct the Director of Public Works to implement the following:

1. Retain ownership of the 7 waterfront road ends.
2. Install benches and waste receptacles at the waterfront entry points on Pleasant Beach Road, Wyldewood Road, and Pinecrest Road.
3. Include the waterfront road ends within the Active Transportation Masterplan for review.
4. Remove existing signage related to the pandemic parking prohibition.
5. Continue to highlight and drive tourism to the City's destination locations including Nickel Beach, Centennial Park, and H.H. Knoll Park.
6. Install sign boards at road end locations to indicate the location, proximity to Nickel Beach and Centennial Park, and rules to respect the environment.
7. Collect existing gate keys & return deposits.
8. Install/Upgrade gates at all 7 road end locations to allow pedestrian access and restrict vehicular access.
9. Create a by-law to restrict vehicular access and parking between the lake and gate on all 7 road ends to replace all other relevant by-laws.
10. Create a process for waterfront access through a Municipal Consent Permit; and

That Council approve increasing the Road Ends capital budget to \$140,000 by pre-encumbering the 2025 capital and related budget by \$40,000.

---

## **Purpose:**

This report is being presented as a result of the Lake End Road Study that was completed by Sierra Planning and Management (SPM). The study assessed the use of specific roadways that terminate at the Lake Erie shoreline in the rural area of Port Colborne and provided recommendations per location based on public consultation. Staff have reviewed the recommendations presented by SPM and have provided points of discussion and in certain instances actionable measures to improve or protect the road ends.

---

## **Background:**

The City of Port Colborne owns multiple roads that terminate at the Lake Erie shoreline. Some of these locations contain infrastructure such as storm sewer pipes and outlets, some act as pedestrian or vehicular accessways to the lake, and some, due to the area, are sand covered and thus informally used as beaches.

In 2020, SPM was retained by the municipality to review the lake end roads due to the following:

- Use of the road allowance as a beach with the related problems of parking, lack of amenities, and for the visiting public;
- Correlated, a lack of protection for private property rights as these road ends are not operating parks with associated by-laws;
- The efficacy of, and issues surrounding, the use of gates to restrict vehicular access;
- Public right to access the road ends within the 66-foot right-of-way;
- Property boundaries that often extend to the high-water mark of the shoreline or, in some case, extend into the water;
- Deeded right of access to the shore for property owners without waterfront;
- The value of these access points to the shore, the importance of the public vistas and the need to enable appropriate public access; and
- The broader opportunity for showcasing Lake Erie in the City as a fundamental part of the City's economic development, tourism, heritage, and cultural competitive advantages.

During the study period, SPM conducted interviews with surrounding property owners and interested stakeholders, conducted a public meeting, and implemented an online feedback forum to ensure all aspects were taken into consideration. A final document was drafted and circulated for public review before being presented to City Council in a finalized version.

The study focused on the following 7 Port Colborne owned waterfront road allowances that terminate at Lake Erie:

- Lorraine Road (Currently Gated Access)
- Weaver Road (Currently Open Access)
- Pinecrest Road (Currently Open Access)
- Cedar Bay Road (Currently Open Access)
- Silver Bay Road (Currently Gated Access)
- Wyldewood Woad (Currently Gated Access)
- Pleasant Beach Road (Currently Gated Access)

During the 2024 budget deliberations, Council approved \$100,000 as a placeholder for any works resulting from this report; to date this budget remains unspent.

---

### **Discussion:**

Each of the seven locations assessed have their own distinct character and have been assessed with this in mind. Staff have reviewed these locations through an individual lens while having an overarching goal of ensuring consistency whenever possible. Overall consistency is recommended within specific areas such as parking, lakefront access, and signage whereas improvements to the user experience are recommended by specific location.

Public consultation guided the SPM report and in turn the recommendations. Staff have reviewed these recommendations based on current events and provided key actions for the City to implement. SPM's recommendations followed by Staff recommendations are provided in Appendix A.

---

### **Internal Consultations:**

The City's Transportation and Parks Division was consulted on current issues and solutions that have brought these recommendations forward and the By-Law Division was consulted on historical and current enforcement issues surrounding parking in the area. The City solicitor's recommendations to mitigate risk to the municipality regarding the species at risk and restricting vehicular access have been incorporated within this report's recommendations.

---

### **Financial Implications:**

The 2024 Budget deliberations approved \$100,000 as a placeholder for the implementation of actions proposed within this report. The cost for this work is estimated to be \$140,000. Staff recommend increasing the Road Ends capital budget to \$140,000 by pre-encumbering the 2025 capital and related budget by \$40,000.

---

## **Public Engagement:**

Public engagement included an online survey, interviews with commercial property owners at or near the road end limits, multiple public meetings, receipt of online feedback, and public consultation on the draft SPM report.

---

## **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillars of the strategic plan:

- Environment and Climate Change
  - Welcoming, Livable, Healthy Community
  - Economic Prosperity
  - Sustainable and Resilient Infrastructure
- 

## **Conclusion:**

The City's consultant and staff have gathered input from the community to ensure their vision is implemented. Since the finalization of the SPM report further information regarding species at risk within the immediate areas has limited the available options regarding access to the waterfront, requiring gated structures to be put in place. The recommendations within this report will enhance the aesthetics of the waterfront road ends while minimizing risk to the City.

---

## **Appendices:**

- a. SPM & Staff Recommendations
- b. SPM Road Allowance Report
- c. LCA Environmental Consultants Letter

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Shypowskyj  
Director of Public Works  
905-228-8133  
steve.shypowskyj@portcolborne.ca

**Report Approval:**

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.