

SEAFORTH: 20/20 VISION

Strategies for supporting LOCAL BUSINESSES during road reconstruction

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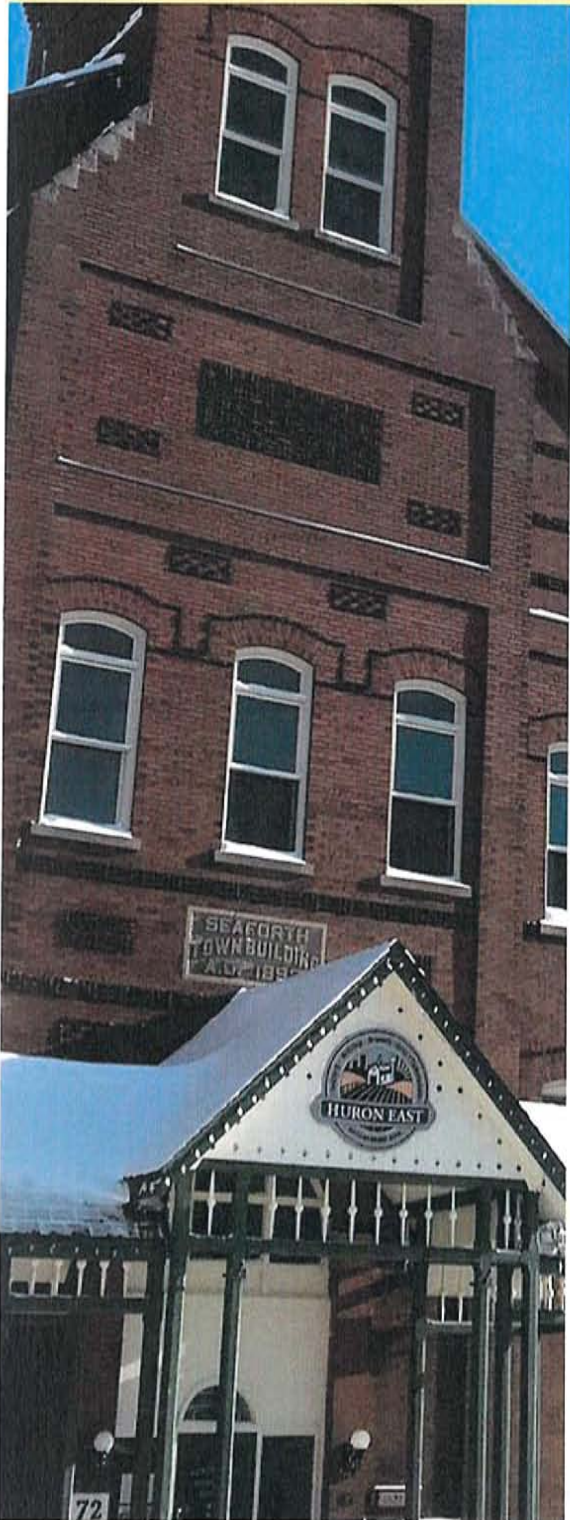


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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

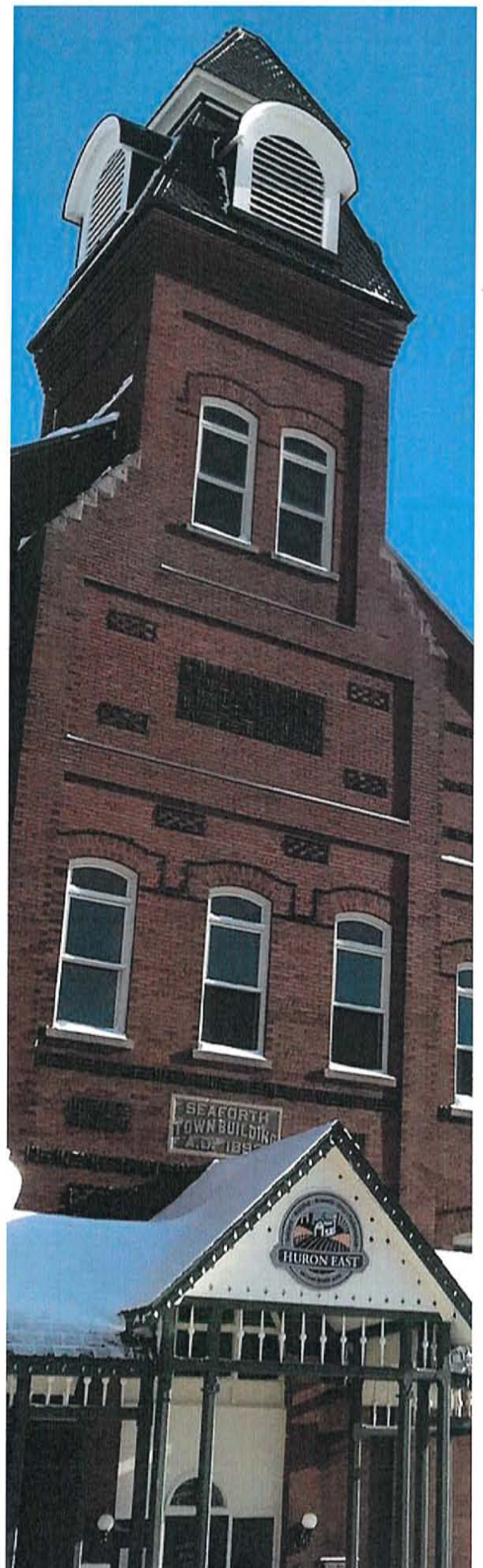


As graduate students of the University of Guelph in the Masters of Rural Planning and Development program, we undertook the Seaforth Main Street Construction Planning project as part of our Advanced Planning Practice course. The three of us hope that the Municipality of Huron East find our ideas useful regarding the Seaforth Main Street reconstruction project. Furthermore, we hope that our ideas can both help retain and improve the experience of consumers during construction.

We would not have been able to complete this project without the dedication and collaboration with Huron East's Economic Development Officer, Jan Hawley. Therefore, we would like to express our deep gratitude to Jan Hawley for her enthusiastic encouragement, guidance, and useful critique of our research work. We would also like to thank Barry Mills, Manager of Public Works for the Municipality of Huron East, for his technical advice and assistance during our work with on the project. We would also like to extend our gratitude to the Seaforth Business Improvement Area Council for their guidance and knowledge dissemination in the planning stages of this project. Last, but not least, we would like to thank Dr. Wayne Caldwell and Paul Kraehling for providing support and guidance throughout the completion of this project.

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Executive Summary

BACKGROUND

Local merchants along Main Street in the settlement of Seaforth have identified a pressing need to find ways to retain consumers during the areas pending road reconstruction project. The Municipality of Huron East is the lower-tier government for Seaforth. Municipal staff acknowledges the benefits of local business and the need to support merchants in the community. Furthermore, staff believe developing an approach to enhance the physical environment surrounding the road reconstruction will make it easier for merchants to retain consumers during the course of the road reconstruction project.

PURPOSE

This report developed several strategies in response to merchants vocalizing a need to prepare for the 2020 road reconstruction project. Huron East has recent experience with downtown road work as a similar project happened in the settlement of Brussels in 2014. However this project resulted in a loss of consumer retention for Brussels merchants. It is because of these challenges that Jan Hawley, Huron East's Economic Development Officer, put together a Request for Proposal to obtain University of Guelph Advanced Planning students to create an approach that the businesses and Municipality can implement to retain consumers.

METHODS

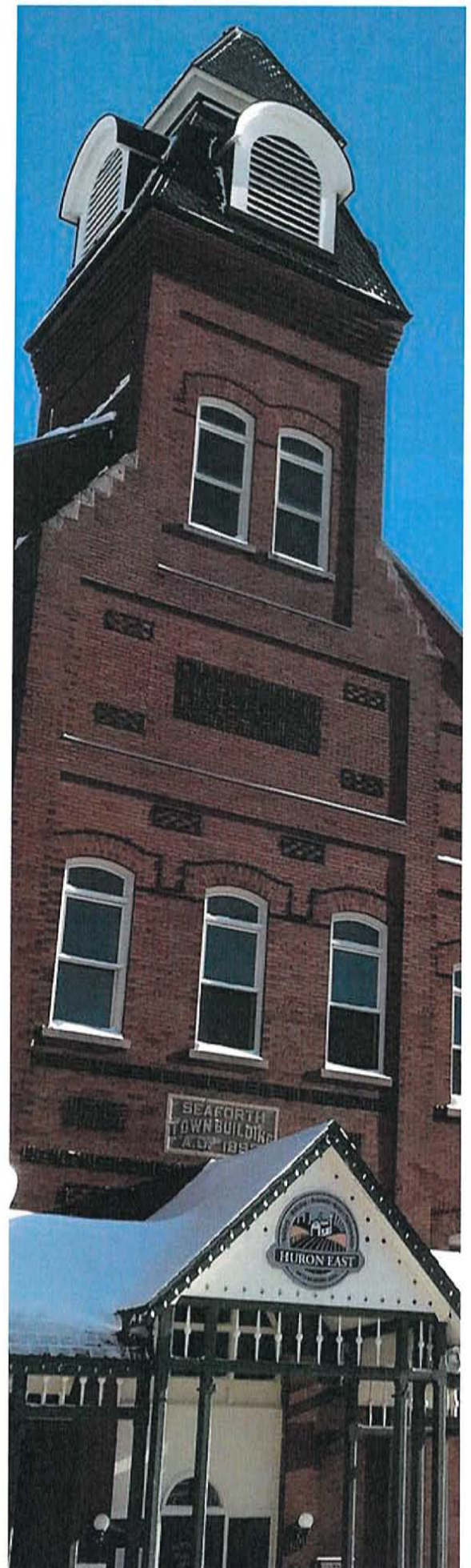
This report has been influenced by a literature review, public engagement, and ground truthing.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Below identifies the key themes and recommendations that the strategies in this report discuss:

1. Local Merchants in partnership with the BIA, Municipality, and County to implement tactical urbanism to encourage consumers to visit and stay in the area.
2. Promotions (i.e. gift baskets, garage sales, etc.) to entice consumers to come and interact with local businesses during construction.
3. Mitigation to protect businesses is to occur throughout the entire process from pre-construction to post-construction.
4. Utilize wayfinding strategies and signage to ensure that consumers feel welcomed in the space throughout the project to improve the user experience.
3. A “walk-your-town” approach can assist consumers in finding their way to the downtown from the relocated parking areas.
4. Limit parking relocations to within a 500 m buffer of the downtown area, appreciating that other individuals currently using the space should not be displaced as a result.
5. If possible, find strategic ways to compensate businesses for lost income.
6. Designate a construction liaison officer as a point person that local business owners can contact for more information or with other concerns.
7. Social media identified as a preferred source of information for the construction project by local business owners. The Municipality of Huron East should also consider physical advertisement to ensure that the communication strategies are accommodating for more individuals and allow for equal access to information.



Introduction

This report represents the findings and suggestions that have been discerned both from literature and from practitioners and community members who provide leadership in their community. During 2019 and 2020, the Municipality of Huron East will undertake a major road construction project (Caudle, 2019). This project will occur along Main Street/ Kippen Road in the settlement area of Seaforth and will be divided into two phases. Through preparing this report, the authors have created several strategic strategy to ensure continued economic development for the Seaforth Main Street stores during the months that the construction will take place. These insights are intended to assist municipal staff and business owners in maintaining their current consumer base throughout the construction process, as well as to mitigate potential negative impacts of construction on the said businesses.

Using this guide.

As you start to use this guide, you will see that there are a series of components that reflect the intended goals and objectives of the Seaforth Main Street Construction Plan. These goals and objectives have been used to create a parking, signage, consumer attraction, and

communication strategy to be implemented in Seaforth along Main Street in preparation for the construction period. Please note that there is no one single approach to the Seaforth Main Street construction plan, and the ideas discussed are merely suggestions to aid in making the construction process run smoothly for the business owners. This guide provides a “road map” that will be helpful during construction; you can however be selective and work with those actions that will be of most value to you and your community. Although the guide is intended as a standalone document, there are additional resources materials that you may find helpful. These include but are not limited to the Seaforth Main Street Revitalization Report (Fu, Lokram, Mascotto-Carbone, & Ouellette, 2017), Seaforth Main Street Community Improvement Plan (Tyerman, Lam, Hajsaleh, & Wan, 2019), and the Huron East Wayfinding Strategy (Herbert, Labute, & Luis, 2016).



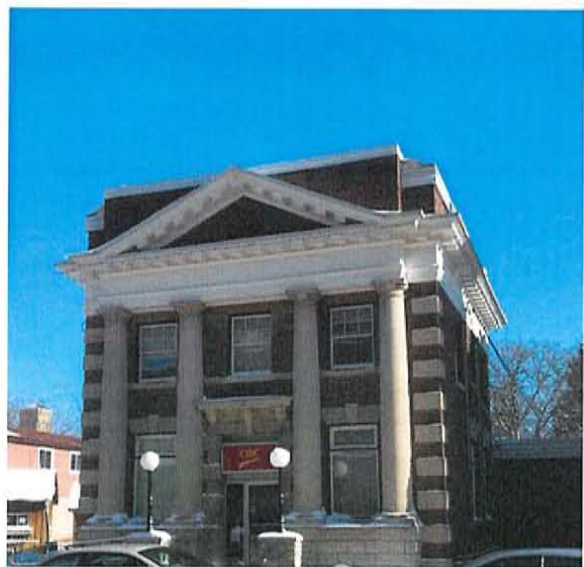
Overview of Seaforth.

The Municipality of Huron East functions as one of nine lower-tier municipalities in the County of Huron. The Municipality was established in 2001 when the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing amalgamated the former Town of Seaforth, the Village of Brussels and the Townships of Tuckersmith, McKillop and Grey (Gregory, 2016). The community of Seaforth now functions as the largest urban settlement centre within the municipality (County of Huron, 2009). Between 2011 and 2016 the community showed to have a growing number of residents, with Statistics Canada (2017) identifying that the community has a population of roughly 2,680 citizens. Seaforth is a quintessential small Ontario town, which has labels itself as "Small Town Canada at its Best" (County of Huron, 2009). This enchantment derives as it offers residents a place to live, work, and play while still being surrounded by agriculture.

Historic architecture.

Seaforth's streetscape portrays a Victorian picturesque landscape and is a testament to the area's rich history and the influences that make rural Ontario and its hierarchy of small urban centers so unique (The Municipality of Huron East, 2008). In 1984, the province recognized the

neighbourhood as a Designated Heritage Conservation District, making it one of the finest late 19th century streetscapes remaining in the Province (The Municipality of Huron East, 2008). The noteworthy architecture includes the design and scale of the uniformed two storey brick buildings (The Municipality of Huron East, 2008). Through grants and local support, property owners have been encouraged to restore and preserve the architectural characteristics of their buildings so that this valuable resource may continue to be an asset in years to come and remain a comforting reminder of Seaforth's history. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the Main Street can maintain its architectural significance and standing throughout the duration of the construction period.



Seaforth's downtown.

The downtown community in Seaforth is unique in the fact that it is one of the oldest heritage conservation districts in Ontario (The Municipality of Huron East, 2008). Many of the businesses that currently line the main street are wonderful examples of mid to late 19th-century architecture, governed by heritage guidelines developed in 1984. Businesses along Main Street have a long history of being family owned and operated. Seaforth's downtown highlights that the importance of small business to local communities is emotionally rooted in buying and selling with friends and neighbours. The importance of small businesses in rural areas (and bigger cities) is seen in the economic benefits of shopping locally, something that the residents of Seaforth do well.

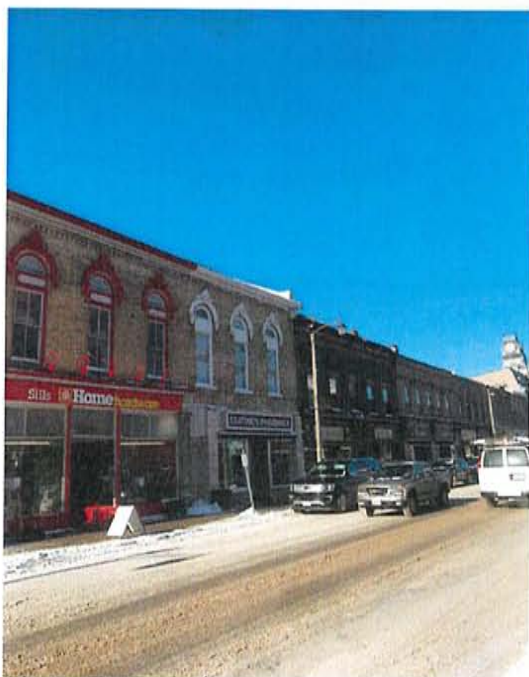
Businesses along Main Street in Seaforth gain tourist attraction since the neighbourhood is a gateway for commuter traffic and transport trucks. However, individuals return because of the sense of place on the Main street that is inspired by the natural heritage and architecture that the street consists of. The sense of place includes the density of the downtown, its variety of offerings through its diverse businesses, such as Sill's Home Hardware to Maria's Wok n Dine, urban qualities, and positive street culture.

Purpose of construction.

Despite the picturesque architecture along Seaforth's streetscape the infrastructure is now in need of rejuvenation. The last significant modification to the infrastructure along Seaforth's Main Street occurred in 1969, roughly 50 years ago. Since that time, the neighbourhood has seen a growth in the number of citizens, tourists, and commuters utilizing the area and now infrastructure updates are needed. Public Works departments from the Municipality and County in conjunction with engineering consultants at BM Ross are in the final stages of preparing a massive urban renewal project for County Road 12 through Seaforth. This project is being completed on behalf of the County as an asset management project to reconstruct the road base and improve the sewer system in Seaforth (Mills, 2019). In 2007, an environmental impact assessment was done on the sewer systems along the Main Street in Seaforth and it was found that the sewer lines needed to be replaced in order to upgrade and protect water resources.

Public Works Manager, Barry Mills stated that this overhaul will involve the "replacement of ageing storm sanitary sewers and services to revitalize the Municipality's water system" (Mills, 2019). This rejuvenation of aging infrastructure

will offer an extension and development of sanitary sewage services to 89 additional individuals living in Seaforth (Mills, 2019). In order to provide these new services Main Street will be reconstructed, which will offer indirect benefits to the downtown core. These benefits will include a new road base, asphalt, curbing, and the replacement of sidewalks (Caudle, 2019). In designing these improvements, it will be necessary for the Municipality to consider the lifecycle of the new assets. Especially, considering future impacts that may result from the increased usage due to future growth and the implications of climate change. The consideration for the full lifecycle will help to ensure a long-term positive pedestrian experience for the area.



Construction impacts on local businesses.

Since 2012, 41% of all Canadian independent businesses have been subjected to some level of disruption from construction and infrastructure projects (Gaudreault, Hammond, Allen, & Grant, 2018). As a result, over 65,000 businesses across the country have experienced negative impacts on their operations in the form of reduced sales, stress, limited customer access, and in some cases-closure. Collateral costs resulting from construction activity can be very high for the average business. The external costs of construction, such as those previously mentioned, are often not considered in design and operation as they are difficult to determine or quantify (Hardy, Larkin, Wunderlich, & Nedzesky, 2007). Regardless of location, large economic costs of construction are often offloaded onto local businesses (Gaudreault et al., 2018).

In a survey conducted by Gaudreault et al. and the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) (2018), eight out of ten business owners indicated that they were not satisfied with the support they received from their government throughout the duration of construction projects. Canadian governments across all levels intend to spend more money on infrastructure development in the foreseeable future. Therefore,

municipalities are encouraged to be more involved and proactive in establishing mitigative strategies to protect their local businesses (Gaudreault et al., 2018). Supporting independent businesses through construction projects is of interest to owners/operators, municipal governments, and local citizens (Gaudreault et al., 2018).

Recommendations developed by the CFIB explore a number of strategies that can be implemented by municipal governments to reduce the impacts of construction on local businesses. Strategies include: compensation, advanced notification, a strong contracting process between the municipality and construction companies, and the designation of a business liaison officer (Gaudreault et al., 2018). However, mitigation should occur throughout the entire process, especially during the physical construction (Wascalus, 2014). The City of Toronto (2000), encourages continuous communication between municipal governments and local businesses to ensure a fast response if any challenges arise. This report will analyze and suggest various tools and strategies to assist Huron East in supporting their local businesses during the upcoming construction project through the downtown.



Goals and objectives.

It is intended that this report will assist the Municipality of Huron East in mitigating disturbances to businesses and residents throughout the 2019-2020 Seaforth Main Street Road Construction Project. Several proactive measures have been developed to assist the Municipality in limiting the impacts of the construction project on customer experience. To address local concerns and integrate their suggestions to mitigate possible negative impacts, this report has engaged with residents and business owners on several occasions. It is the goal of the Municipality and those writing this report to attempt to make the construction project a positive experience for Seaforth. The guiding principles for this project are as follows:

- To engage in a process that honours a “Made-in-Seaforth Approach” that is specific to this community;
- To engage in a transparent process where a collective vision of research goals are shared between the team and with Huron East Staff, and where the roles and expectations of team members are clearly understood;
- To foster trans-disciplinary dispositions; and
- To create a collaborative research partnership where members draw upon individual skill sets to meaningfully and mutually work toward the team’s vision.

Preparation of this report.

In order to effectively prepare strategies for the Seaforth Main Street construction plan, the role of the students and East Huron staff, methodology, and deliverables were identified.

Role of the students and East Huron staff.

University of Guelph students:

- To attend a site visit of the thoroughfare of downtown core;
- To engage with community members and collect secondary research; and
- To produce a final report and present the findings to the community.

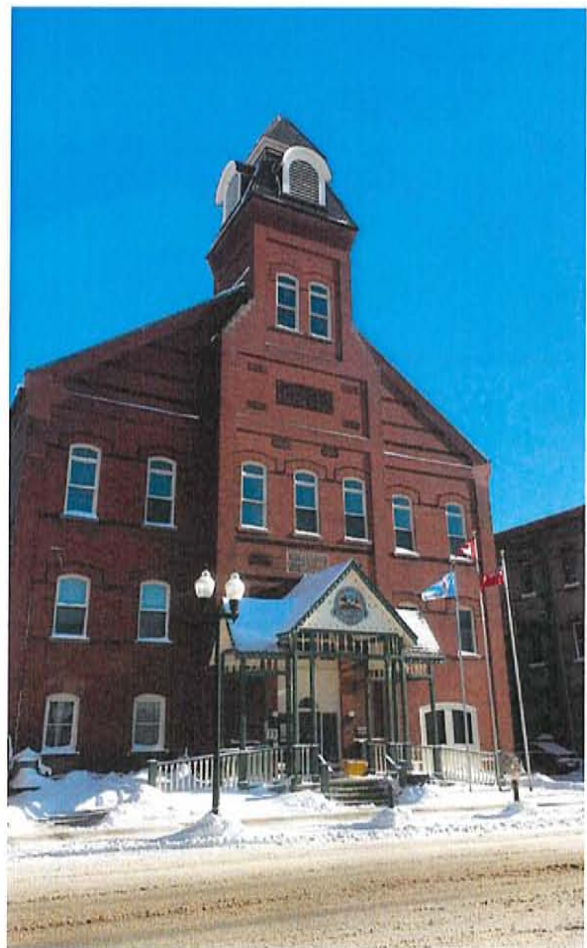
Municipality of Huron East staff:

- Support the research by providing technical documents and information where needed, such as construction plans/ drawings for Stage 2 (Main Street Downtown) of the Road Construction, aerial photography, and other documents and resources;
- Provide communication support throughout the project.
- Hire at least one, possibly two ambassadors, during the summer to assist people, etc. shopping in the downtown. The ambassadors would help customers navigate the construction area and answer questions about the businesses in the affected area.

Deliverables.

In order to meet the goals and objectives of the Seaforth Main Street Construction Project a final report/presentation to BIA is required. The report/presentation to the BIA includes:

- Consumer Navigation Strategy
- Consumer Attraction Strategy
- Communication Strategy



Methodology

To prepare the strategies and recommendations provided in this document, key informant interviews, literature/case study research, and public engagement opportunities have been utilized. Through the utilization of the identified methods it is hoped that a 'Made-in-Seaforth' approach was achieved and represented in the outcomes of this report. Our strategies adhere to a "Made-in-Seaforth" approach to insure that they are practical and applicable to the community if implemented by the Municipality or BIA.

owners provided insight into their consumer attraction ideas, concerns, and other feelings about the project. Responses were recorded and further analyzed for consistent themes to ensure that the participants' thoughts and concerns were considered throughout the development of the final report.

Key informant interviews.

On February 1st, 2019, a series of informal interviews were conducted with business owners located along Seaforth's Main Street. A total of five businesses (n =5) were visited and invited to participate in the interview process. Throughout the interviews conducted, a number of questions were asked relating to the upcoming road reconstruction project. Business



Timeline of report preparation.



Literature & case study research.

A critical analysis of various case studies from a number of municipalities that have experienced similar reconstruction projects were analyzed. Through this analysis, weaknesses and strengths of mitigative strategies (or their absence) were explored. Additionally, overall challenges and issues experienced by local business owners as a result of reconstruction externalities were identified. Challenges identified through the case study research assisted in the development of strategies to address and hopefully prevent their recurrence in Seaforth. Strategies implemented by other municipalities that were found to work well were further researched and developed as potential opportunities for the Seaforth reconstruction project. Particular attention was given to strategies that attracted and maintained consumers throughout the construction process, thereby supporting local businesses. Other municipal publications were consulted for strategies, not necessarily related to construction, but could be beneficial if applied in this context (i.e. wayfinding strategies, branding, social media, events etc.).

Public engagement.

On April 10th, 2019, a public engagement event was hosted at the Seaforth Golf & Country Club. Attendees (n=16) of the meeting included local politicians (n=2), municipal staff (n=2), and Business Improvement Area (BIA) members/ local business owners (n=12). An interactive presentation outlined key considerations in the development of mitigative strategies and allowed for feedback from attendees. The strategies developed through the interviews conducted and the literature/case study research were identified and explained. Attendees were invited to participate in a series of engagement activities throughout the presentation. Participation was encouraged through the use of MentiMeter, Dotmocracy, and anonymous post-it notes.



MentiMeter:

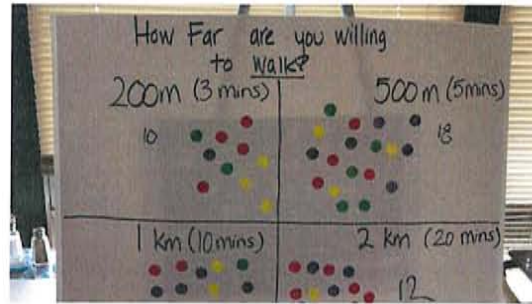
Attendees with access to a smartphone were able to interact with MentiMeter for two questions. The first asked 'what was the profession of the attendees in the audience'. Answers were collected and generated into a word cloud, which highlighted retailer as the most prominent profession. The second question asked the audience to indicate (between four dates) when seaforth's had its last major road reconstruction. From the responses collected the majority of respondents perceived that the last major project was more resent (either 1989 or 1995) then it actually was (1969).



Dotmocracy:

Smartphones were swapped for stickers and post-it notes. A dotmocracy was utilized so that attendees could weight their answers to two questions. These questions asked attendees how far they were willing to walk to pick up goods and access services and how they would like to receive information regarding updates to the construction project. For each question attendees were given four stickers. Attendees could use the stickers to indicate and

weigh which options they preferred by the number of stickers they put in a category box. The outcomes of these democracies will be discussed in the following strategies for Seaforth.



Anonymous post-it notes:

In addition to utilizing a dotmocracy activity, a number of questions asked attendees to provide anonymous answers to various questions by writing their responses down on post-it notes. This tactic allowed innovation and creativity in the answers provided the attendees and allowed them not to be self conscious when providing feedback. This tactic was used for three questions during the engagement night: 1) develop a slogan for the construction project; 2) develop ideas for consumer attraction; 3) challenges and improvements expected from this project. Again, the outcomes of the post-it notes will be discussed in the following strategies for Seaforth.



SEAFORTH 20/20 VISION

Consumer Attraction
Strategy



Executive Summary

The creation of this Consumer Attraction Strategy was approached through critically analyzing interviews and engagement with local businesses, reviewing other main street reconstruction projects, and the use of a walkability audit.

The audit has enabled this report to determine how consumers presently interact with the space and envision how consumers will be impacted during construction. From the audit, several short and long term opportunities were noted to improve the pedestrian experience. The short-term solutions in this report have identified the need for tactical urbanism strategies and events to be implemented while construction is ongoing so that consumers enjoy their experience. In addition to implementing elements of tactical urbanism the interviews and engagement determined the additional need to implement in-store promotions to further attract consumers.

This strategy will now be divided into three sections: 1) walkability audit; 2) tactical urbanism; 3) in-store promotions.



Above creative post-it note ideas generated by those in attendance at the public engagement night on April 10, 2019.

WALKABILITY AUDIT

Yield to
Pedestrians



BUSINESS
AREA

GT MINI MART

The Looking Glass

Salon

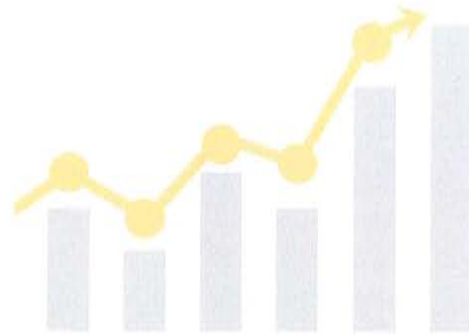
Day Spa



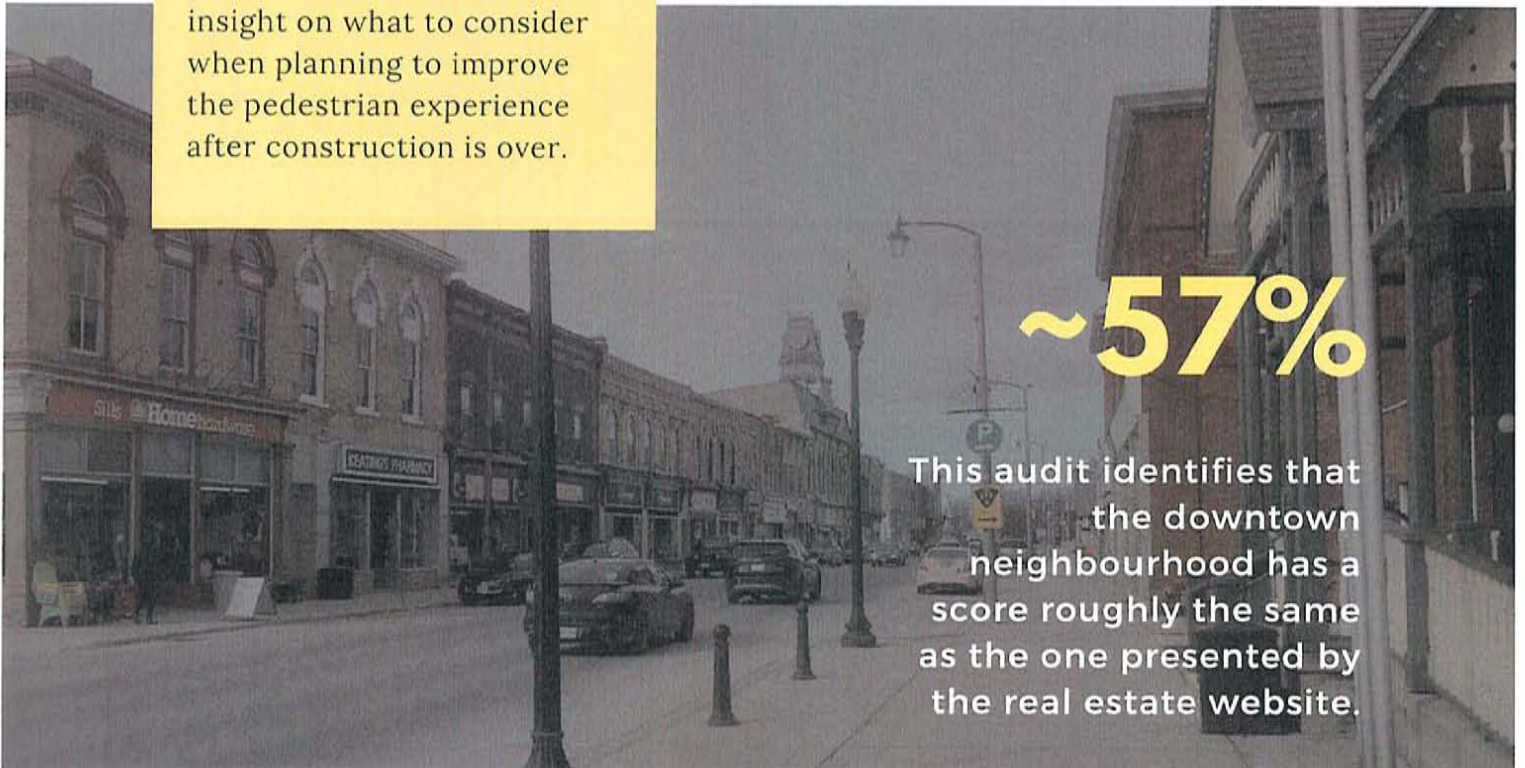
WALKABILITY AUDIT OVERVIEW



This document is a comprehensive audit on the walkability of the Municipality of Huron East's downtown neighbourhood in Seaforth. This area is selected due to the fact that the municipality has planned for the street to undergo a reconstruction project in the summer of 2020. This report will offer insight for municipal staff, BIA members, and local citizens wishing to understand the areas current walkability. Furthermore, it will provide insight on what to consider when planning to improve the pedestrian experience after construction is over.



According to WalkScore.com, Seaforth's downtown area scores 60% for its walkability. Suggesting that "some errands can be accomplished on foot".



~57%

This audit identifies that the downtown neighbourhood has a score roughly the same as the one presented by the real estate website.

WALKABILITY AUDIT



A walkability audit is an instrument that assesses how pedestrian-friendly a landscape is (Caldwell, 2018). Several factors contribute to a positive walking experience, these factors include well designed and maintained streets, sidewalks and paths that are visibly appealing and safe for users (Talen & Koschinsky, 2013). This walkability audit of Seaforth's downtown neighbourhood will be displayed throughout this report with the use of photos outlining the critical successes and failures of the route and a general evaluation through a checklist developed by the Town of Whitby (n.d.).

This walkability audit covered roughly 610 metres of centerline road around the downtown neighbourhood (seen below). The inspection started by assessing the prominent Main Street streetscape where business storefronts are present, then finished by evaluating the back alleyways behind the Victorian buildings and adjacent side streets. For this audit, the back alleyways and side streets were important to evaluate as some businesses are considering opening their back doors to customers during construction. During the inspection eight intersections were crossed: only one offered both an accessible pedestrian signal and push button while the remaining seven were unmarked. During the audit there were many favourable and unsuccessful examples of pedestrian infrastructure; the following section identifies these examples.

Outline of the walking route chosen for the neighbourhood



(Google Maps, 2019)

Success #1 Pedestrian signal & push button.



The intersection at Main and Goderich was the only area that offered a designated place for citizens to cross. This intersection was valuable during the walk as it provided both an accessible pedestrian signal and push button. At this intersection, there were clear instructions on how to use the crosswalk and the device to indicate the need to cross. It felt safe to cross at this intersection as there was a lot of space allocated for the pedestrians. There was both a visual and audio signal informing us which way was safe to cross and how many seconds were left until it was no longer safe to do so. While we had a positive experience crossing at this intersection, we do understand that this may not apply to all people. As Main Street South is wide, certain pedestrians could have difficulties crossing the crosswalks with the time limit, specifically people with walking impairments.



**KEY
SUCCESSIONS
AND FAILURES**

Success #2 Washroom.



In the middle of the downtown core, there is an information booth and public washroom facility. The entrance way into the washroom has been constructed to be accessible with the use of a wheelchair ramp. In addition to functioning as a public washroom, the facility also offers a shaded area where if needed citizens can escape from the sun.

However, at the point of the audit, there was no railing that went up the ramp. The missing handrail may result in two types of falls: 1) from those who need the bar for stability, and 2) trips from people jumping over the edge, which may occur as they try and save time. Furthermore, the shaded area did not offer any seating making it less of an inviting place for citizens to rest if needed.



Success #3 Architecture.



Upon exploring the area, the unique characteristics of the surrounding buildings were recognized right away. The unique aspects of the streetscape, from the Victorian Architecture, offered the space a sense of place. This architecture and the sculptures on the sides of buildings provided the walk with an enjoyable ambiance.



Success #4 Town hall .



The municipality office building for Huron East is located along Main Street and offers residents an opportunity to either choose the stairs or a ramp to get into the building. The ramp has a railing accessible for citizens to provide them with security and stability they need when entering the facility. Additionally, winter maintenance was performed on both the stairs and ramp, which insured that customers no matter their physical abilities had equal opportunity to enter the facility.



Success #5 | Failure #1 Curb intersections.



All the curb intersections along our audit provided a ramp for pedestrians to cross the street and transition onto the sidewalk easily. This ramp along with a detectable warning field are both required for new infrastructure projects by accessibility laws. Detectable warning fields identify pedestrians, specifically those who have seeing-impairments, that they are approaching an intersection. Truncated domes are now considered to be the optimal form of warning for pedestrians, especially when they are installed with a colour contrast to the sidewalk.

The colour contrast in domes at the intersection at Main and Goderich was a **success**.

The lack of domes and colour contrasts providing warning fields along the rest of the route was a **failure**. Most intersections did not have any warning fields, and if they did, they often were just lines engraved into the concrete.



Failure #2 Sidewalk safety hazards.



During our entire route, we walked on and off of a sidewalk. We found that the route was not always level and smooth. Both sidewalks and alleyways were found to be poorly maintained in multiple areas along the route as there was uneven concrete and potholes. The alleys behind the businesses require immediate maintenance from Public Works. This maintenance is because several businesses have indicated that they will be opening up their back doors during the road reconstruction, which will make this area a safety hazard for customers. The customers who will be the most vulnerable are the elderly and people with physical disabilities, as their mobility is restricted.

Additionally, the poor maintenance will be a hazard to bicycle tires as they are thin and therefore susceptible to getting damaged or caught in holes. The first task in addressing these hazards will be for Public Works staff to paint a contrasting outline around any issue. This outline will act as a precautionary measure to alert customers to avoid and travel around hazards.



Failure #3 Lack of designated crossings.



Of the eight intersections that we crossed only one was designated a pedestrian crossing location. It is necessary for the Municipality to consider installing a courtesy crossing or pedestrian crossover at least 100 m up from the current designated location. Adding this additional location will ensure that pedestrians do not have to cross at their own risk - darting into traffic - if they are not near Main and Goderich. This audit recommends a pedestrian crossover as drivers by law will be forced to stop for pedestrians, unlike courtesy crossing which can be confusing for pedestrians as they do not know if and when drivers will stop to let them pass.



Failure #4 Lack of bicycle posts



While this is a walkability audit, this report would like to identify that the lack of bicycle posts is ineffective for both cyclists and for pedestrians. When bicycles do not have a designated area, they are left stranded and leaned up against stores. As a result, bicycles may take up too much room on the sidewalk, fall and be a hazard to pedestrians, and potentially block the entrance way into stores. It is essential for the municipality to critically consider where they should install bicycle parking infrastructure so that bikes are not in the way of pedestrians.



SUMMARY



Overall, our walk through the downtown core of Seaforth was an enjoyable experience. We were able to explore local businesses and view the historic architecture in the area. During our walk, a prominent feature that stood out was the municipal office building. It offered not only an accessible entrance and interesting architecture but also provided pedestrians with a link to nature, as trees and shrubs are located around the base of the building. With our initial experience being positive, we made sure to critique the overall walkability of the area; especially we considered what challenges demographic groups could face during this route (see **Appendix A**).

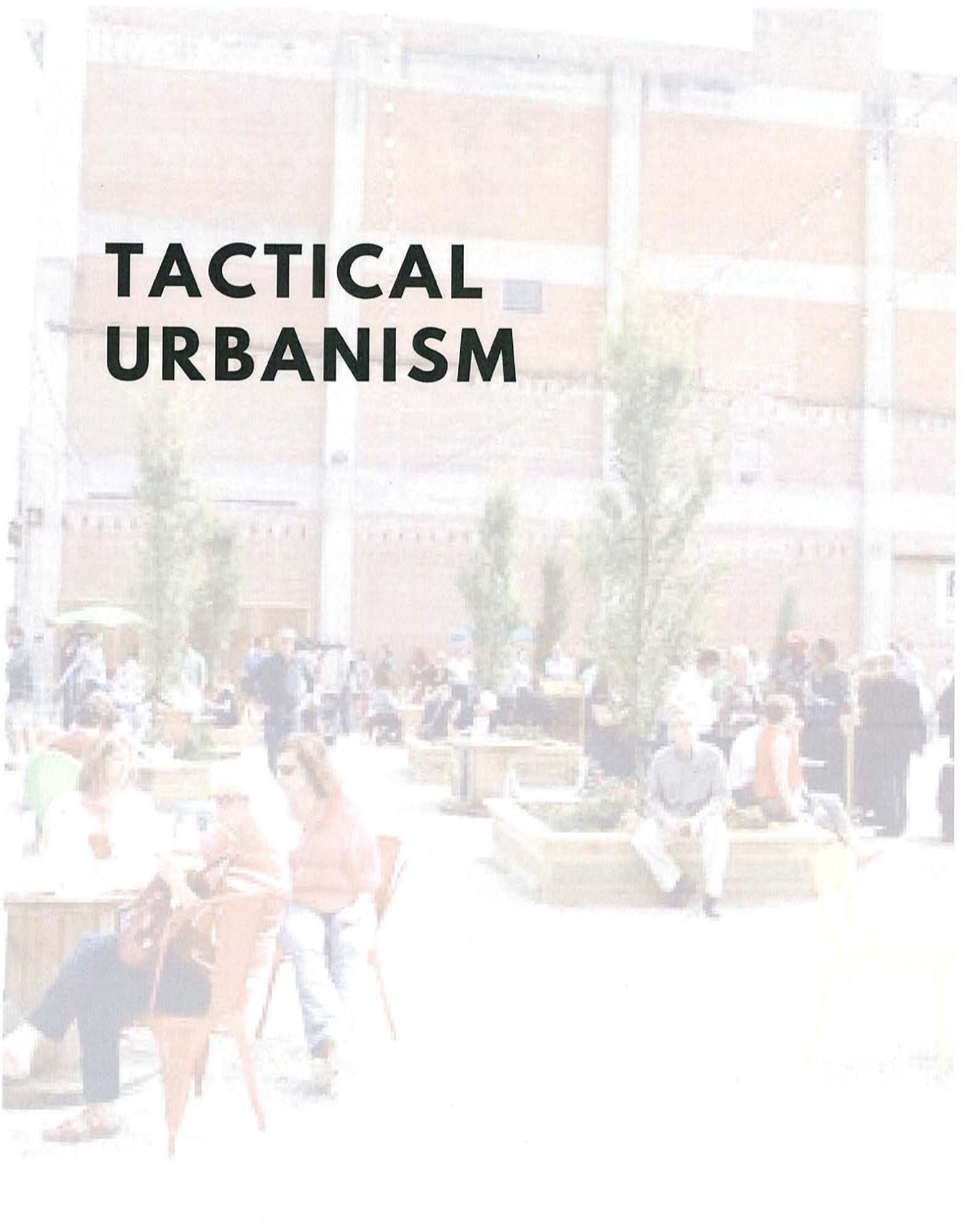
This audit has determined that there are several opportunities that the Municipal of Huron East should consider to help improve the pedestrian experience in Seaforth. Primarily, these include enhancing the walking experience, crossing, sidewalks, safety, and traffic in the community. These enhancements do not have to occur all at once. It is in the opinion of this audit that the Municipality divide the improvements up in relation to the 2020 Main Street reconstruction project.

Short-term quick solutions can utilize "tactical urbanism" to implement flexible and affordable projects (Berg, 2012). Implementation of tactical urbanism projects can help improve the walking experience and sidewalks adjacent to Main Street. Projects can focus on implementing natural elements, providing opportunities to sit under the shade, and ensuring that walkways are level. Tackling the walkability of the side streets, walkways, and alleys adjacent to Main Street should be completed prior to the 2020 Road reconstruction. Improving the walkability of these areas will help make the downtown more enjoyable during the construction and help retain customers.

Medium-term solutions can be obtained by adding them into the design of the 2020 road reconstruction. The road reconstruction project's design should include a pedestrian crosswalk near Main and Market and bicycle posts along the corridor. Adding bicycle posts into the design will help enhance pedestrian comfort walking along the sidewalk as bicycles will no longer be cluttering the area. While a pedestrian crossover will help improve pedestrian confidence and safety when crossing the street. Crossing near Main and Market is currently the most dangerous location the audit encountered. Main Street South is a busy corridor due to local traffic, agricultural vehicles, and commuters. At the intersection of Main and Market (by the municipal office), there is no crosswalk in 100 meters (1-minute walk) in either direction for pedestrians to utilize. The closest designated crossing location is 215 m north, which is impractical for pedestrians to use.

Long-term solutions include improving the shading options around the downtown core. Shade can be enhanced in two ways: 1) planting more trees (precisely at the info booth location) and 2) having businesses install awnings above their entrance ways. The Municipality can help with the awning by arranging a facade grant through their Community Improvement Plan Project Area.

TACTICAL URBANISM



TACTICAL URBANISM



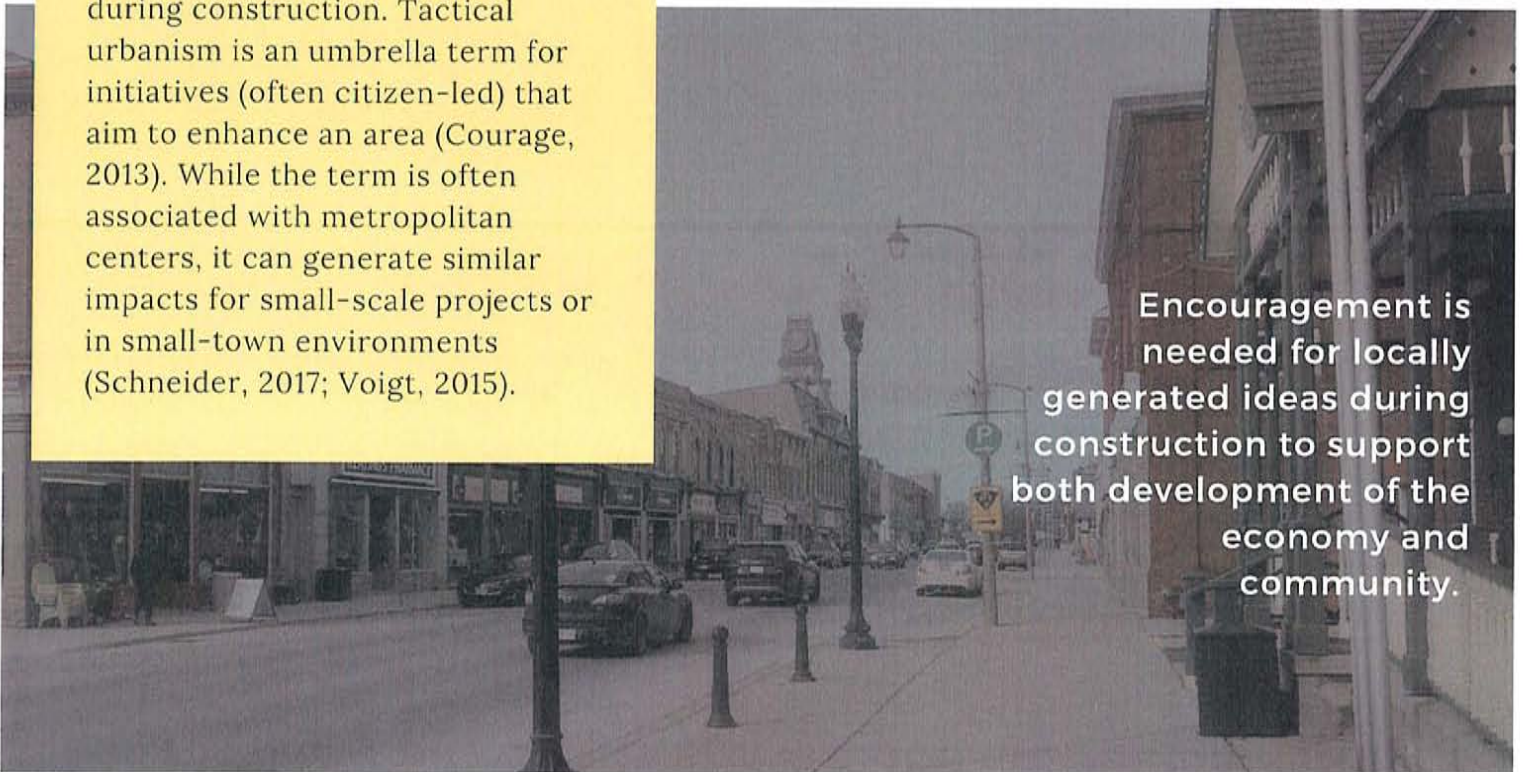
The Municipality of Huron East is partnering with the County of Huron to redevelop County Road 12 in Seaforth. Even with the sharing of infrastructure costs the project is expected to cost the Municipality millions of dollars (Loughlin, 2019). As a result, it is important to find affordable initiatives that are flexible during the construction project, to help retain and attract consumers. Tactical urbanism is an approach that Huron East's economic development officer and BIA should explore when considering ways to help attract consumers during construction. Tactical urbanism is an umbrella term for initiatives (often citizen-led) that aim to enhance an area (Courage, 2013). While the term is often associated with metropolitan centers, it can generate similar impacts for small-scale projects or in small-town environments (Schneider, 2017; Voigt, 2015).



Pop-up Cafe in Barberton, Ohio (Schneider, 2017).



Encouragement is needed for locally generated ideas during construction to support both development of the economy and community.



Partnering for mitigation.



New social-economic demands and challenges will ultimately be generated in Seaforth, along Main Street, during the 2020 construction. These demands will require the Municipality to support new locally driven innovation. This support is necessary as municipal tools such as official plans, zoning by-laws, and design standards are often lengthy and costly mechanisms to utilize when attempting to quickly improve the community and maintain the economy (Voigt, 2015). Courage (2013) explains that tactical urbanism is an approach the grassroots activists have been using to empower communities without getting caught up in red-tape bureaucracy. Citizen-led Do-It-Yourself (DIY) projects function for municipalities as a new form of civic participation as they offer an alternative channel for democratic engagement (Courage, 2013). Projects are often statically circumscribed to a park, building, or neighbourhood (Brenner, 2015) and can take the form of pop-up markets, gardens, idea bombing, and guerrilla wayfinding (Finn, 2014). Due to the spontaneity and temporary nature of these projects to respond quickly to social-economic needs, project champions have often, at the forefront, not sought proper approvals from municipal authorities (Brenner, 2015; Courage, 2013).

Some critics question how governments can balance public safety, equity, and long-range visions while supporting tactical urbanism (Low, 2006; Schmidt, Németh, and Bostford, 2011). Finn (2014) presents a solution to this: suggesting that municipalities can partner with those who are enthusiastic about integrating DIY projects in a neighbourhood to solve an issue. From Finn's (2014) article, this report suggests that the Municipality of Huron East and County of Huron can take one of two approaches to partner with those interested in implementing DIY projects during the Main Street Construction project to attract customers. The first approach is that the Municipality and or County can create a program that provides formal oversight to citizens, while citizens take on an active role to creatively address localized issues. The other approach that offers the Municipality and County oversight and approval power is for them to use their existing planning tools to solicit DIY solutions to address specific problems or locations. Finn (2014) identifies methods such as: "Requests for Proposals (RFPs), small grant programs, special DIY-friendly overlay zones, targeted DIY experiment sites, DIY temporary use permits or even "hackathon"-style events" (p. 393-394).



While governments can partner with those that are enthusiastic to implement tactical urbanism, the success of projects lies in their grassroots nature (Brenner, 2015). The champions and drivers of successful tactical urbanism projects must come from those understanding and experiencing first-hand the extent of an issue and the urgency to perform an intervention. In the case of the construction project in Seaforth, if tactical urbanism is desired, this report suggests that it will be the local merchants who will need to step-up as project champions. Local merchants are the best candidates in Seaforth to champion a project because they carry the highest burden if customers are not retained and because of their direct access to customers, they know their clients needs the best. Therefore, it is important to trust them in implementing activities that will help support the local economy and community.

It is important to remember that tactical urbanism merely is ad hoc to issues that are ongoing in a community (Brenner, 2015). Their ad hoc nature is what makes them essential in society as it allows them to quickly acknowledge social-economic challenges that a governing body has yet to address. This ad hoc nature will make it crucial for the Municipality of Huron East to monitor and evaluate them during the construction project to critically determine if the initiatives are needed

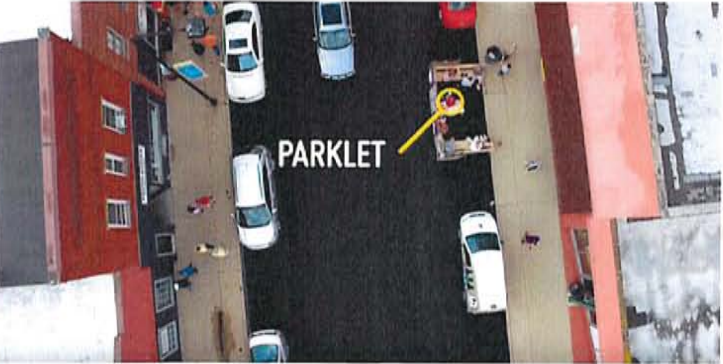
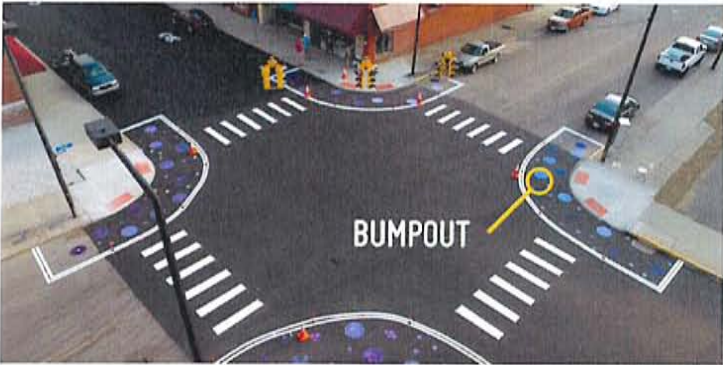
to continue following construction. If so, monitoring and evaluations will enable municipalities to strategically implement actions that address social-economic issues and ensure the activities complement the long-term planning of the community (Finn, 2014).

It is essential for the Municipality of Huron East to be aware that there are examples of tactical urbanism projects that have been implemented in several small towns throughout Ontario and further in North America. In Ontario, these places include the Town of Bracebridge, Collingwood, and Penetanguishene, Township of Essa, and the urban settlement of Fenelon Falls within the City of Kawartha Lakes (Voigt, 2015). Penetanguishene and Fenelon Falls are essential examples for this report as both locations utilized tactical urbanism as part of their downtown redevelopment projects. Penetanguishene used examples of tactical urbanism to implement road diets and patio enhancement projects, while Fenelon Falls used it to generate various cooperative projects between citizens and municipal staff (Voigt, 2015). The other communities mentioned used it to improve active transportation by commonly implementing the useful Walk-Your-City/Town strategy designed in North Carolina (this strategy is discussed in the Consumer Navigation Strategy) (Voigt, 2015).

Examples of small town tactical urbanism.



Below show examples of tactical urbanism from Barberton, Ohio. The Better Block Foundation worked with Barberton (and many other communities) to enhance their existing assets (Schneider, 2017).



See **Appendix B** for a guide to tactical urbanism design for Seaforth, Huron East.

IN-STORE PROMOTIONS



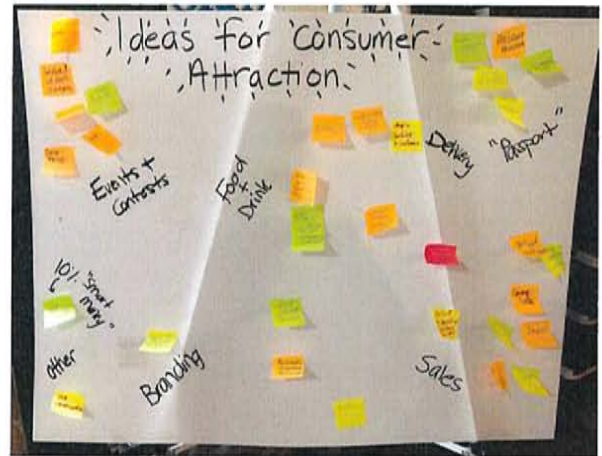
IN-STORE PROMOTIONS



Through the interviews conducted in February 2019, it was identified that a number of local business owners would be willing to engage in in-store promotions during the construction project along Main Street. This is a sentiment that was echoed during the public meeting in April, 2019 when attendees were asked to come up with innovative ideas for consumer attraction. Roughly 33 post-it notes were created by attendees outlining the creative ideas that attendees generated (see figure to the right). From these 33 post-it notes, this report grouped results into eight themes: (1) events and contests, (2) food and drinks, (3) delivery, (4) passport, (5) sales, (6) branding, (7) smart money, (8) and other. The majority of ideas generated indicate the need for local merchants to offer some kind of in-store promotions during the construction project.

From the interviews in February it was further concluded that several local merchants came together to offer a "girls night gift box" to a winning customer. Each of the merchants partaking in the contest donated one item from their store that matched the theme of the box. In order to be eligible to win all a customer had to do was pop in to one of the various stores partaking in the contest to cast a ballot. Customers did not have to buy anything they just had to come into the stores and the more stores they popped into the more ballots they got. Merchants identified most customers did in fact end up buying products from their store making the contest economically viable for them to partake in.

This report believes that merchants should take the momentum they had from *gift box giveaway* and continue it during the construction project. Merchants can theme boxes to holidays like Canada and May 24/long weekend or connect them to sporting events in the community, such as a local golf or baseball tournament. What will be important is that boxes attract a range of consumers so there is not a saturation of one specific group.



Examples of in-store promotions.



Examples of gift baskets are retrieved from Pinterest

Funding & compensation.

The CFIB identifies that there is a lack of insurance programs available in Canada to support independent businesses or compensate for interruptions as a result of construction work (Gaudreault et al., 2018). Claim processes available to business owners are not always successful and require a challenging, costly, and judicial process. These processes regularly require extensive evidence, legal representation, and expert or engineering support, and thus are not attainable for many businesses (Gaudreault et al., 2018). Therefore, municipalities are often encouraged to identify possible strategies for compensation programs or policies to implement during construction work. It is important to note that the Ontario Municipal Act prohibits municipalities from providing direct or indirect monetary support (i.e. grants, tax levy, etc.) towards commercial enterprises (Government of Ontario, 2001). However, the Planning Act supersedes the Municipal Act and allows municipalities the opportunity, in some instances, to provide financial aid to industries when they are located within a Community Improvement Plan area. Therefore, it

is recommended that Huron East consider modifying their Community Improvement Plan in the downtown before the 2020 construction project commences to allow for the possibility of some form of compensation.



SEAFORTH 20/20 VISION

Consumer Navigation
Strategy



Consumer navigation strategy.



As Seaforth's Main Street undergoes construction, the familiar environment will become a new space with different navigational requirements for both foot and vehicular traffic, throughout the duration of the project. Finding one's way through any given environment largely relies on previous experience, and navigating unfamiliar or new spaces can be challenging for some individuals (Boumenir, Georges, Valentin, Rebillard, & Dresp-Langley, 2010). Challenges experienced during navigation are emphasized as environments become more complex (He, McNamara, Bodenheimer, & Klippel, 2018). As Seaforth's Main Street gradually transitions into a construction zone over the course of the project, assisting local business owners and residents in finding their way around the space will become increasingly important.

Wayfinding refers to the information systems utilized to guide people through various physical environments and to enhance understandings of the particular space. These can include visual cues such as maps, directional elements, symbols, and signage (Boumenir et al., 2010; Society for Experimental Graphic Design [SEGD], 2014). Inability to effectively navigate or wayfind', can increase the amount of

time individuals take to locate their destination and can create frustrations leading to the avoidance of the space altogether (University of Michigan, n.d.). Implementing effective navigational tools to assist residents and business owners in finding their way through or around the construction site will improve user experience and foster a sense of security and allow individuals to feel welcome in the space. Effective wayfinding is associated with a positive visitor experience and increased spending, having an overall positive impact on the local economy (Foltz, n.d.; N. Barry Lyon Consultants Ltd., 2016). The creation of a system to convey navigational information additionally allows motorists to simplify their travel routes (SEGD, 2014). Navigational considerations will be addressed by exploring options for all forms of transportation. Particular attention is will be given to vehicular and active transportations.



Photo from CANVA



Navigating automobiles.

Through a visual inspection, it was determined that the upcoming construction project will remove a minimum of 85 available parking spaces along Seaforth's Main Street. Therefore, it is important that these spaces be relocated to continue attracting consumers to the downtown area. The relocation of available parking spaces will need to be conducted in a reasonable manner that considers the needs and preferences of consumers and business owners. In doing so, attention should be given to the willingness of individuals to walk certain distances and in ensuring that wayfinding information is provided so as to prevent consumers from being deterred from making the short trip (University of Michigan, n.d.; Yang & Diez-Roux, 2012).

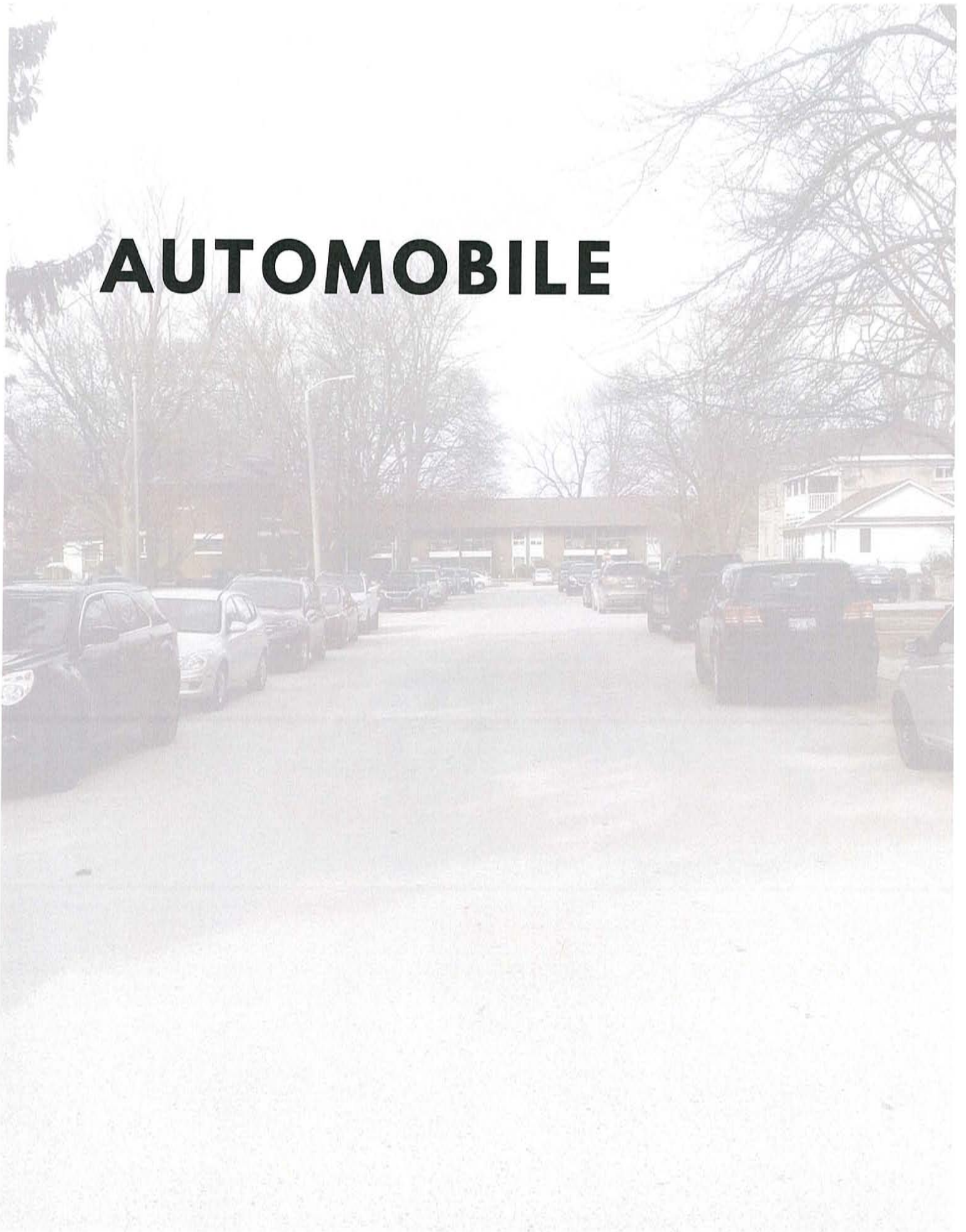
Parking relocations.

As a result of the parking relocations associated with the downtown reconstruction, it is likely that residents and visitors will be required to walk from their cars to the retail amenities. In identifying areas in Seaforth that would be feasible to relocate available parking, it is integral that the willingness of individuals to walk versus drive be considered. Distance to commercial amenities can influence rates of walking activity, thus having a

potential impact on visitations to local businesses in Seaforth given the necessary parking changes (Nagel, Carlson, Bosworth, & Michael, 2008; Yang & Diez-Roux, 2012). The distance between parking facilities and retail environments can significantly impact one's decision to participate in shopping activities (Van Der Waerden, Timmermans, & De Bruin-Verhoeven, 2017).

In general, it is estimated that the average individual is willing to walk ~400 m, or five minutes to any given destination. This value is often utilized as a buffer in determining walking distances and the likelihood that an individual will walk versus drive (Yang & Diez-Roux, 2012). It is important to note that the type of activity can also have a potential influence. For example, individuals are generally only willing to walk a short distance to do weekly shopping/errands versus those participating in shopping as a non-weekly social activity (Van Der Waerden et al., 2017). Planners are often encouraged to consider these factors when reorganizing parking supply in downtown/inner town areas. However, it is important to recognize that for some individuals with walking limitations, parking at farther distances is not feasible (Van Der Waerden et al., 2017).

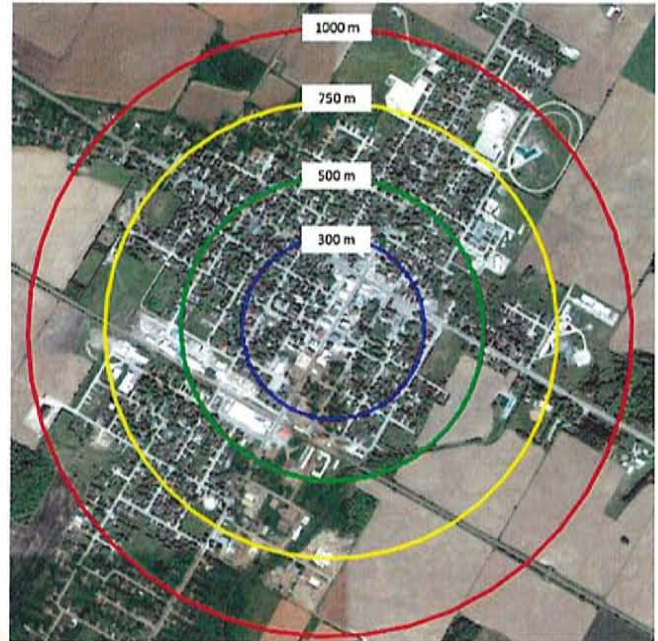
AUTOMOBILE



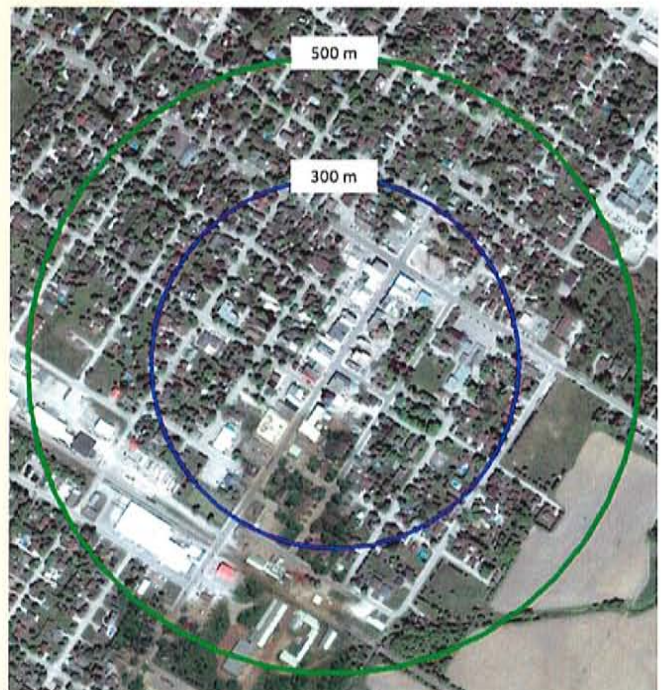


The results of the public engagement event utilized to inform this report, determined that a walking distance of 500 m or less (< 5 minutes) would be preferred for the residents and businesses owners in Seaforth. To understand the implications of this understanding and other considerations identified in literature on the parking relocation associated with Seaforth's downtown reconstruction, a map indicating potential parking buffers has been generated (see figures to the right). The radius of each circle surrounds the centre of the downtown area. The visualized buffers can be utilized to identify potential areas to relocate parking, so long as it is permitted by Huron East By-laws. The Municipality of Huron East is encouraged to consider these buffers in the relocation of the 85 parking spaces that will be removed from the downtown during construction. It is important to note that many side street areas, prior to the removal of the 85 parking spots, already experience an overabundance of on-street parking. Due to this, it will be important for the Municipality to educate residents to park in their driveways when possible throughout the construction period so that space is provided to consumers. In addition, it will be valuable for the municipality to partner with businesses and property owners who have space for extra parking to create pop-up parking lots during construction.

Parking buffers: 300 - 1000 meters



Parking buffers: 300 - 500 meters



The background image shows a brick building with a window and a door. A "HELP WANTED" sign is on the door. Two bicycles are parked in front of the building. The text "ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION & ON-SITE CONSIDERATIONS" is overlaid in large, bold, black letters.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION & ON-SITE CONSIDERATIONS

Navigating with active transportation.



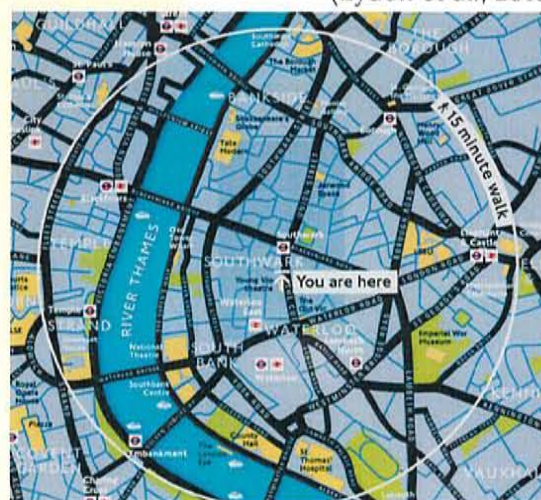
Active transportation includes any form of “human-powered travel, including but not limited to, walking, cycling, inline skating and travel with the use of mobility aids, including motorized wheelchairs and other power-assisted devices moving at a comparable speed” (MMAH, 2014, p. 38).

No matter how a consumer begins their travels, the end of their trip will always include some form of human-powered transportation. If consumers perceive that their final destination is too far, they will avoid partaking in active transportation activities altogether. It is therefore important to implement a variety of wayfinding techniques so that consumers can better understand the downtown space. Implementing wayfinding signage will help to alleviate any uncertainty around choosing to walk from their vehicle or home and offer consumers confidence in doing so.

An initial consideration for Huron Est would be for the production and posting of 2D maps around the relocated parking spaces indicating the current location of consumers upon parking in relation to the space around them (figures to the right) (Boumenir et al., 2010). In addition, a “walk-your-town” approach can assist consumers in locating their way from their parked vehicle to the



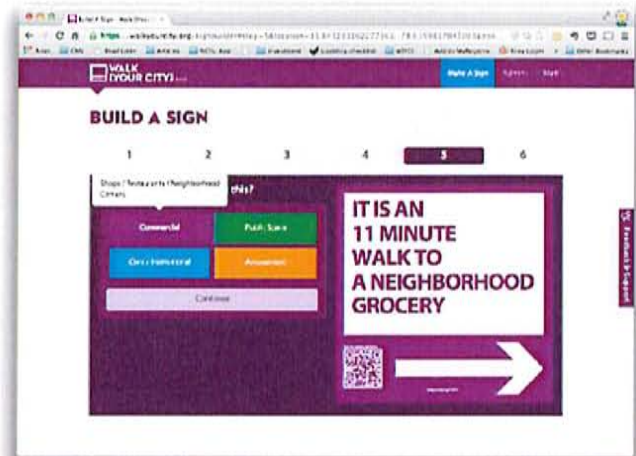
Example of wayfinding 2D map (Lydon et al., 2016)



Example of wayfinding 2D map (Schiffer, 2019)



downtown. The “walk-your-town” technique highlights the walkable scale of communities by utilizing directional signage that indicates the amount of time (in minutes) that it would take to walk to various destinations from exact locations (Town of Gravenhurst, 2017). This low-cost, yet effective, approach has been implemented in many municipalities across Ontario including the Town of Gravenhurst and the City of Greater Sudbury. Signage used in the aforementioned communities was affordably produced by walkyourcity.org (figure to the right) (Town of Gravenhurst, 2017). The signage can be easily moved or removed as the project progresses. The usage of walking-time signage can assist consumers in recognizing that Seaforth’s downtown is not too far of a walk from where they are parked, encouraging visitation of the Main Street (Walk [Your City], 2019). In the implementation of a signage strategy it is also recommended that signs be strategically located at decision points to enhance wayfinding decisions and improve user experience (Total Alliance Health Partners International [TAHPI], n.d.).



Example of wayfinding signs (Goodyear, 2015)

Active transportation parking allocation.



In addition to pedestrians, cyclists are another predominant active transportation group. As a result it is important for the Municipality and County to allocate space for bicycle parking close to Main Street in Seaforth. It will be especially important through the duration of the road construction project. When construction is underway consumers may perceive that the space provided to them is too tight. If there are no designated parking spots for bicycles they may clutter the space provided for pedestrians and hindering the overall aesthetics and safety (becoming a tripping hazard) of the area.

From the site visit in April, 2019 on a day of 5 degrees Celsius, there were already consumers choosing to bike to the different merchants along Main Street. Since there is no designated bicycle parking spots near Main Street, bicycles were left scattered along the sidewalk making the pedestrian experience less enjoyable (see the top photo on the right).

In order to improve how pedestrians interact with the space during the construction project it will be important to provide designated parking spots for bicycles. These parking spots should be located all around the construction project (a.k.a on both the west and east sides of Main Street). If parking is only allocated to one general location it will not encourage

cyclists to use the facility, resulting in bikes still being scattered along the Main Street. Signage indicating where the new bicycle parking spots are located will be required, as customers have not been accustomed to Seaforth offering bicycle parking and therefore will not know to look for them. This report proposes that Seaforth invest in bike corrals as they offer several spots for bike and able to be moved to different locations around the community. In order to save money, the Municipality and County may wish to partner with high school or college welding programs. These programs provide experiential learning opportunities for students and would offer the town bike corrals at an affordable price (see the bottom photo).



Bike corrals
(Town of Gravenhurst, 2017)

SEAFORTH 20/20 VISION

Communication
Strategy



COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES



The development of a communication strategy that meets the needs and preferences of the local business owners in Seaforth will be a valuable tool. Through the implementation of a successful communication strategy a healthy, respectful, relationship can be formed between impacted businesses, the Municipality, and the contractors (Gaudreault et al., 2018). It is important to ensure that an operational communication plan is implemented early in the construction process so as to limit the disruptive impacts on the community and allow for feedback and collaboration to optimize the effectiveness of mitigative strategies, such as those discussed in this report (City of Toronto, 2000; Gaudreault et al., 2018). The Municipality of Huron East has already started communications with the community of Seaforth, therefore the strategies discussed in this report may be considered as methods to enhance the currently existing system (see Appendix C for guiding principles to consider).

Effective communication.

Throughout construction, the importance of effective communication is paramount.

Allowing for business owners and the community to remain informed and providing opportunity for feedback is a key aspect of reducing impacts to local businesses (City of Toronto, 2000; Gaudreault et al., 2018). To reduce confusion and enhance the flow of information, it is recommended that a single individual be designated as a liaison officer. This has proven to be successful for the cities of Kingston and Toronto (Gaudreault et al., 2018). This individual would be responsible for informing and consulting, before the project commences and throughout its duration. It is hoped that by providing business owners with a single point person, issues can be resolved as early as possible. The provision of a an individual point person should assist in fostering a respectful relationship between all parties (Gaudreault et al., 2018). Building a relationship between all groups is important due to the fact that effective communication may be prevented if underlying conflict exists (Borcherding, 1978; eSUB Construction, 2017). The individual should practice active listening and appreciate the business owners feelings throughout the project as it could be a challenging process (Borcherding, 1978; eSUB Construction, 2017; Gaudreault et al., 2018).



Social media.

Should major concerns arise, face-to-face contact and communication is recommended (Gaudreault et al., 2018). However, it is important to recognize that this may not always be the fastest and most accessible form of communication for every aspect of the project (eSUB Construction, 2017). As a result of the public engagement event utilized to inform this report, it was determined that communications through social media would be the most preferred option for business owners in Seaforth. As aforementioned, this report can work in conjunction with the Seaforth Main Street community Improvement Plan (CIP). A deliverable of the CIP was the production of a Seaforth Facebook page (Tyerman et al., 2019). This digital platform will also be beneficial for use throughout the duration of the construction project. It can be challenging to communicate with an entire community, however the benefits of effective social media engagement can allow for easy and timely delivery of information (Marabella, 2019). Some municipalities have found the use of social media as an effective tool to inform residents about construction projects (CivicPlus, n.d.). However, it is recommended that the Facebook page be utilized as a community 'hub' versus just related to the 2020 construction so as to create an online community. This should be implemented well before the construction project commences to

ensure an active following is built and engaged in the platform; this will allow for information to reach more people when information related to the project is posted (CivicPlus, n.d.; Marabella, 2019).

Municipal governments can utilize social media platforms to inform residents about a variety of services and events including council meetings, engagement, tourism, live streaming of events, and job postings (CivicPlus, n.d.). To allow users to easily identify information related to the construction project, or other topics, consistent branding is encouraged. This can be achieved by implementing certain graphic design elements or colour schemes related to the project that community members can become familiar with and extract information easily from the online posting. The City of Timmins utilizes specific branding templates to ensure consistency in their advertising and information dissemination efforts (City of Timmins, n.d.). Additionally, the utilization of infographics is an effective way to creatively highlight important information. Infographics are valuable in simplifying complex information and condensing long reports in an interesting way that can attract readers (Venngage Inc., 2017). Through the utilization of consistent branding and creative information dissemination techniques, it is hoped



that community members will be actively engaged in a communication strategy that can provide key information relating to the 2020 construction project. Although social media is suggested as an option for communication, it is recommended that this webpage be closely monitored to ensure that engagement is respectful.

Through experience utilizing the Municipality of Huron East Webpage, it is suggested that the website be updated with information related to the construction project as it becomes available. The banner scrolling across the main page of the website can be updated with information related to the project (or other news events). This will ensure that individuals looking to contact the municipality about the project or other events can easily retrieve the information without needing to spend a lot of time searching. The Seaforth Facebook page and Huron East municipal website can be used as tools to communicate what stage the construction process is at, anticipated end dates, and when the next stage of the construction will commence. These communication strategies can also work in tandem with the business/consumer attraction strategies discussed in this report as a method to identify upcoming events and incentive activities.

Physical advertising.

Through the interviews conducted in February 2019, it was identified that a number of local business owners would be willing to allow for in-store advertising and communication about the construction project. Opportunities for in-store communications would include posters, flyers, and information related to the consumer attraction strategies. It was also suggested throughout these interviews that posters be strategically placed in locations that are visited regularly by Seaforth residents. Locations suggested as regularly visited locations included the post-office, bank, and Foodland grocery store. By encouraging hardcopy advertising, communications about the project are more inclusive to a wider audience, specifically to those without access to the internet/computers or prefer not to utilize social media.

POSSIBLE ISSUES



Throughout the Main Street construction project there are possible issues identified that could be a cause for concern. Although these issues may not materialize, it is felt that these challenges were important to mention so as to make the Huron East Municipal staff and community members aware. The potential issues include but are not limited to: businesses losing financial income, the project exceeding its timeline, and the suggested strategies not being applicable for the context of Seaforth.

Businesses losing financial income.

There is justified concern that the local businesses along the Main Street will be unable to attract their regular clientele, vehicle traffic, and pedestrian traffic through their storefront advertisement. In turn, business owners may take a financial hit to their total gross revenue throughout the construction process because of the decrease in customers (Gaudreault et al., 2018). The anticipated outcome is that the Business/Consumer Attraction Plan will mitigate this issue during the Main Street construction and allow for businesses to retain their normal financial income. However, if businesses are experiencing this, they should contact the Municipality as soon as possible so that action can be taken and the profile of the affected business can be noted and improved.

Project exceeding its timeline.

As with any construction project there is always the concern that the project will exceed its anticipated timeline. The Municipality of Huron East has created and will implement a realistic, detailed and accurate schedule, which will go a long way toward achieving the ultimate goal of improving the sewer systems in Seaforth. Therefore, it is not anticipated that the project will exceed its timeline. However, if the project begins to take longer than anticipated, the municipality will need to communicate transparently with the business owners and Seaforth residents about the issues that have occurred that could prevent the project from being completed on time (City of Toronto, 2000; Gaudreault et al., 2018). From learned experience, The City of Toronto (2000) recommends that road work companies be 'prequalified' through the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) before finalizing contracts. This process takes into consideration the financial and technical ability of contractors to complete projects within a specified time frame (City of Toronto, 2000). The City of Toronto (2000) indicates that qualification criteria should be included in the specifications, which would allow bidding companies to demonstrate that they possess the skills, resources, and machinery to complete the project with limited impacts to the community.

Suggested Strategies not applicable for Seaforth.



The final notable issue is that the suggested strategies may not be applicable for the Municipality of Huron East. Often, and even despite when appropriate processes have been implemented, relevant project data at the initial planning stages of the project is scarce. If this report is based on wrong assumptions due to insufficient, or misunderstood data then the project may be unintentionally driven towards a poor outset. This will occur if there particularly if there is no alternative plan in place and no means with which to easily modify strategies before impacts become too grand. Therefore, it is suggested that the municipality also consider other alternative strategies in order to help the Seaforth Main Street construction plan/report be able to be flexibly modified as the project evolves and more information becomes available.

THANK YOU



MEGHAN BIRBECK, EMILY HEHL, & SARAH PARISH

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APPENDIX A



WALKABILITY REPORT CARD



USING THE TOWN OF WHITBY'S CHECKLIST

SIDEWALKS, STAIRS, RAMPS, & WINTER SAFETY



Indicators	Score	Comment
Are facilities accessible to all pedestrians?	3	For the most part. However, stairs without ramps and handrails can make facilities difficult to access.
Are there sidewalks along the route?	2	Not in the alley way.
Are there sidewalks on both sides of the street?	2	Sidewalks on both sides of Main Street S however there are none in the alley.
Are sidewalks smooth, wide and even, with no cracks or holes?	3	Most are wide and somewhat smooth but have cracks.
Are sidewalks level?	3	Sidewalks are mainly level.
Is there enough space to walk on the sidewalk?	3	Main Street South has enough room. However, the adjacent streets have less room.
Are sidewalks free of obstructions?	2	Bikes are left stranded against buildings and poles are located along the to sidewalk and can be in the way depending on the pedestrian traffic level.
Are sidewalks separated from traffic by a parkway?	2	There is no parkway in between the road and sidewalk, however, Main Street S has on-street parking providing a buffer between pedestrians and active traffic.
Are the edges of stairs and ramps marked with a contrasting colour?	0	Ramps and stairs all have the same colour as the sidewalk.
Do stairs and ramps feel safe to use?	3	Some stairs into local businesses seem cracked.
Do stairs and ramps have railings on both sides?	2	Many local businesses have a step into their establishment yet they often do not offer a railing.
Are stairs safe to use in wet weather?	3	Railings would make the steps safer.
Are sidewalks safe to use in winter?	3	Audit took place on a snowy day but sidewalks were not slippery and were shoveled.
Are there grit boxes in the neighbourhood?	-	Unaware

60%

0 = Never | 1= Rarely | 2 = Sometimes | 3 = Most of the time | 4 = All the time

CROSSING



Indicators	Score	Comment
Do pedestrians seem confident about crossing the road?	1	Only designated crossing area for pedestrians is Main Street S and Goderich Street E. There are not any courtesy crossing or pedestrian crossovers. Therefore pedestrians usually cross at their own risk.
Are there safe places to cross every 100 metres?	1	No
Do curbs have ramps at sidewalks and crosswalks?	4	Yes to ramps at Main and Goderich
Can you clearly see traffic before crossing the street?	4	Yes at Main and Goderich
On wide roads, is there an island or median in the middle of the road to wait for the next light?	-	Not needed
Can you use an underpass or overpass to cross very busy streets?	-	Not needed
Is there a crosswalk where you need one?	1	--
Do drivers give pedestrians the right of way at crosswalks and at stop signs and stop lights?	4	Drivers give pedestrians the right of the way at Main and Goderich.
Can you get across the street before the light changes?	3	Yes but it would be challenging for people with disabilities or elderly people.
Does the traffic light change soon after you push the crosswalk button?	2	No typically took 1 minute.
Can you cross the street in time and within the crosswalk lines?	3	Yes but it would be challenging for people with disabilities or elderly people.
At unsignalized crossings, do you have to wait long for a gap in traffic? Do you have time to cross safely?	1	No pedestrian crossovers or courtesy crossings. Have to rush across the street.

60%

0 = Never | 1= Rarely | 2 = Sometimes | 3 = Most of the time | 4 = All the time

WALKING EXPERIENCE



Indicators	Score	Comment
Is the ambience pleasant and supportive routes for walkers?	2	Historic buildings are pleasant.
Does the route have natural elements?	1	Minimal hanging baskets and shrubs in the summer along Main Street S.
Are there trees along the street?	1	A couple around the municipal office building.
Is the street well lit?	2	New light put up along Main Street, yet the alley way is not as well lit.
Is the street clean?	2	Did not see litter or garbage along Main Street, however, litter was present in the alley and side streets.
Is there little amounts of air pollution due to automobile exhaust?	3	Could not tell.
Are there interesting things to see?	2	Historic buildings.
Are there other people out walking?	2	Went midday during the work-week so there was little to no pedestrians.
Are there shady places with benches that can give you a comfortable place to sit and take a rest?	1	Shade at the washroom facility.
Are there public washrooms that you can use easily and safely?	3	Washroom at the information booth.
Are there trees, building awnings and bus shelters that give protection from sun, rain, and wind?	1	Rarely.
Is there a water fountain that you can get a drink at?	0	None seen.
Is the overall walking environment pleasant?	3	Fairly.

44%

0 = Never | 1= Rarely | 2 = Sometimes | 3 = Most of the time | 4 = All the time

PERSONAL SAFETY



Indicators	Score	Comment
Do pedestrians feel safe in their environment?	3	During day walks it feels safe.
Are you able to cross at crosswalks or where you can see and be seen by drivers?	2	At Main and Goderich, but no where else.
Are you able to cross with the light?	3	Yes. But some others with mobile impairments may not.
Is the Street well lit at night?	2	Well let on Main street but not as well let in alley.
Do you feel safe walking at night?	2	Along Main but not as safe in alley way.
Are there lots of other people around?	2	Some.
Is it rare that there are people who scare you or make you uncomfortable?	3	Few.
Are there houses and stores where you could go in case of trouble?	3	Most businesses on route close in late afternoon.
Are there phones you could use to call for help?	2	Bell pay phone half way up the street and maybe business phones that potentially can be used. However, many businesses do not stay open late.
Is your route free of suspicious people, vandalism, crime and graffiti?	3	Seemed safe.
Are there police, security guards, or a park, or pathway patrol on your walking route?	0	None present.
Are dogs properly controlled by their owners?	4	Yes, on leash. Sidewalks are not as wide though which could cause interaction with curious/aggressive dogs.

60%

0 = Never | 1= Rarely | 2 = Sometimes | 3 = Most of the time | 4 = All the time

TRAFFIC



Indicators	Score	Comment
Is it rare for vehicles and pedestrians to interact?	2	Interactions occur as pedestrians cross street without a designated place provided.
Is there sufficient space between the sidewalk and the street?	2	Parking barriers provided on Main street no space in alley and on neighborhood streets the sidewalks are directly adjacent to the street.
In crossing areas, is your view of traffic free of obstructions?	2	Have to walk between cars to then look to see if its safe to cross.
Is traffic light enough to make walking pleasant?	3	The traffic light has sound, audio along with a walking signal to let pedestrians know they can cross.
Is the speed limit suitable for this neighbourhood?	4	Yes.
Do drivers obey the speed limit and other traffic laws?	4	Yes.
Do drivers yield when appropriate?	3	Most of the time.
Does the road design help slow down traffic?	2	No visible speed bumps. But there are vehicle parking along the neighbourhood.
Are drivers careful?	3	For the most part. Drivers go through yellow lights fast to make it.
Are drivers careful not to splash walkers when there are puddles on the streets?	2	Along the alley it is hard for driver not to splash walkers.
Are cyclists careful around pedestrians? Do they dismount when approaching pedestrians or do they drive slowly, use their bells and leave plenty of room between their bike and the walkers?	-	No bicyclists seen.
Do the parking lots you walk through have sidewalks and/or crosswalks?	0	No.

0 = Never | 1 = Rarely | 2 = Sometimes | 3 = Most of the time | 4 = All the time

61%

APPENDIX B



TACTICAL URBANISM GUIDE BOOK



STEP 1. LOCATION



Through an onsite visit to Seaforth and from public engagement several locations have been selected for tactical urbanism to be implemented in Huron East.

These locations include the following:

1. The west back alleyway
2. The information booth
3. Gouinlock Street
4. Parking lot of Municipal Huron East
5. Market Street
6. John Street
7. John Street municipal parking lot
8. The east back alleyway for the John Street bock



STEP 2. TIMES



Through an onsite visit to Seaforth and from public engagement it is proposed that various tactical urbanism activities be put on during the course of the road construction and during specific strategic times.

Permanent Activities



Along the fences signage can be hung that lets consumers know that businesses are open (above is an example from Toronto). It is important to also offer signs with the logos of specific business so that consumers are further drawn in. Photo from: (Swan & Fracassa, 2017)



In addition to store logos there can be fun art produced by locals to further enhance the consumers experiences. It should be pointed out that if art and logos are big enough they can help mitigate dust impacts on local business by offering a barrier between the construction and store entrances. Photo from: (40Visuals, 2017)



Surrounding side streets to Seaforth's Main Street may experience more pedestrian traffic so crosswalks can be added (like this one from Barberton, OH) Photo from: (Schneider, 2017).

Strategic Activities



Events like pop-up markets may be selected to occur in the evenings, weekends, or on specific dates like every fourth of the month ("come see Seaforth on the fourth"). These events will be set up and taken down during on the days the events operate.

Photo from: (McBride, 2015; VisitWichita, 2013)

STEP 3. MATERIALS

This sections utilizes the Tactical Urbanist's Guide (Lydon et al., 2016) to inform Huron East on examples of what can be utilized for easy and affordable DIY projects in Seaforth.

Barrier Elements



Barrier elements should be utilized in Seaforth to help indicate where pedestrians and cyclists can travel and also where pop-up activities are taking place. In addition, barriers provide those engaging in a new land-use a sense of safety from motor vehicles. Lydon et al. (2016) identifies four broad material groups for barrier elements: posts and cylinders, solid barriers, planters, and curbing.





Street Furniture

Street furniture will increase the length of time consumers stay in Seaforth. Providing consumers a place to relax and socialize will increase the likelihood that consumers will go to multiple store and want to come back. This is because they will be develop a more positive experience with the landscape and not want to rush home or somewhere else if they are provided with a relaxing location within Seaforth. It will be essential to provide shade where there is seating to increase the use of street furniture.

Surface Treatments



Surface treatments will further help define a new land use in Seaforth. Colourful treatments will appeal to those in an area and increase the number of individuals engaging in the activity. Lydon et al. (2016) identifies three broad material groups for surface treatments: striping, pavement markings, and colour.





Landscaping Elements

Additional plants and trees are important for Seaforth especially during the road construction project. Lydon et al. (2016) identifies that they not only enhance the areas aesthetics but also offer consumers environmental benefits by offsetting the CO2 emissions, which will be produced from the construction project.



Programming

It will be vital for programs to run in designated locations around Main Street during evenings and weekends while construction is underway. Programs will help enhance community excitement about tactical urbanism projects that maybe implemented throughout the sounding area. Lydon et al. (2016) offer four categories of programming ideas: exercise, games, art, and music.

Signs

Signs are discussed in the Consumer Navigation Strategy.



APPENDIX C



COMMUNICATIONS: GUIDING PRINCIPALS



GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Throughout the development of the communication strategy, the Municipality of Huron East is encouraged to consider the following principles (Ohlson & Yakis-Douglas, 2018):

- **Integrity**- commit to providing reliable, accurate, and clear communication to the public before and throughout the duration of the project.
- **Trust and respect**- be dedicated to open communication and seek to listen and understand stakeholders, municipal officials, and staff in regard to their concerns about the project. Ensure that respect is maintained when collecting information and understand privacy rights of all groups.
- **Accountability**- communication strategies should define goals to ensure that the municipality is accountable through the establishment of open communication. This means that the municipal staff will remain transparent and post project deadlines on social media so the public remains well informed.
- **Professionalism**- the Municipality of Huron East is encouraged to follow branding Guidelines with a consistent and professional look and feel; ensure that all platforms are conveying the same information.
- **Inclusivity**- An integral part of communication is ensuring that messages are “getting out” to as many people as possible. The Township will be inclusive by establishing messages that are clear, understandable and in plain language and through a variety of communication forms.

