



## Planning and Development Services

<b>Prepared for</b>	Council-in-Committee	<b>Report No.</b>	PDS-45-2018
<b>Agenda Date</b>	July 9, 2018	<b>File No.</b>	350308.006

<b>Subject</b>	<b>CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN – STRATEGIC SESSION OUTCOME AND SYNOPSIS – INFORMATION REPORT</b>
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<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>THAT</b> Council receives Report No. PDS-45-2018 regarding the outcome of Strategic Planning Sessions conducted for the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan for information purposes.
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<b>Relation to Council's 2015-2018 Corporate Strategic Plan</b>	
Priority: Prosperous and Growing Community	
Goal: A1 - Achieve senior government commitment on key projects and policies	
Initiative: A1.2 – Continue to communicate on key issues/advancements of projects	
Priority: Strong Customer Service, Relationships and Communications	
Goal: C3 - Expand and improve connections with internal and external partners, stakeholders and agencies	
Initiative: C3.2 - Engage government agencies to strengthen two-way relationship	

<b>List of Stakeholders</b>	
Landowners / Developers / Residents and Business Owners and Crystal Beach BIA, Fort Erie Economic Development and Tourism Corporation, Region of Niagara, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Various Agencies, School Boards, Utilities and Ministries	

Prepared by:	Submitted by:	Approved by:
<b>Original Signed</b>	<b>Original Signed</b>	<b>Original Signed</b>
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### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council on the results of the two Strategic Planning Sessions recently undertaken as part of the early orientation of the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan exercises. The report supplies the results of the strategic sessions, highlighting varied perspectives and some similarities from both key staff and the Council endorsed Community Focus Group.

The report expresses priority goals for Planning staff to pursue in the development of a Secondary Plan using policy and zoning to structure a land use plan to help facilitate the vision being established as part of this Plan's early stages.

This report acts as a building block to start the discussions with a broader audience of full time and seasonal residents, business owners, investors, agencies and other levels of government. The Focus Group and senior staff have provided a barometer that should assist Planning staff navigate a wholesome consultation period, to flesh out perspectives of the many voices that have vested interest in their community's future. Planning staff look forward to the consultation process to enable formulation of a policy framework that conforms to cascading Provincial and Regional policy while still allowing local goals and objectives to stand out and give the community lasting character and pride throughout their entire neighbourhood.

A map showing the extents of the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan Area (an Official Plan Amendment) is provided as **Appendix "1"**.

### **Background**

The Crystal Beach Neighbourhood is one of the three "neighbourhoods" that comprise the Town's westerly waterfront urban area. The community's history is well documented and rooted in late 19<sup>th</sup> / early 20<sup>th</sup> century as modern settlement began taking shape. From establishment of the religious camp and amusement park, the village thrived as a destination particularly between the two World Wars. The interest in the amusement park waned and came to a close in 1989, which essentially marked the end of an era for part of the community's identity and attraction, and was followed by a period of rest and amelioration.

Re-development of the old amusement park lands in 1992 marked a period change to the community's landscape and character. Loss of the amusement park set the stage for a slow and yet uncertain future with one less draw to support commercial enterprise, albeit mostly seasonal. Real estate was considered a bargain and considerable rental accommodation was available for an extended period of time.

The Town undertook several planning studies and exercises including the Community Assist for an Urban Study Effort (CAUSE) Report of 1996, which was furthered by the Town's Neighbourhood Plan Program almost a decade later. The Volume 1 and Volume 2 (2005) editions of the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood Plan provided background for the era and also provided a policy/guidance document that served as a development road map. While an effective guideline, the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered planning policy, as it was not embedded in the Town's Official Plan. Today, this Secondary Plan

exercise will result in an Official Plan Amendment that will ensure the Planning Policy and Land Use ultimately developed are embedded in the Official Plan, forming Official Town Policy for future growth, capital and investment purposes.

Council authorized initiation of the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan on February 20, 2018 with approval of Report No. PDS-14-2018. That report provided direction to staff to assemble a Community Focus Group (CFG) for the purposes of participating in the Secondary Plan process over the course of the exercise. On April 23, 2018 Council endorsed the CFG through Report PDS-26-2018.

## **Analysis**

### **Sessions Overview**

As in the past, staff had arranged two separate strategic sessions in order to garner insight from two distinct points of view. The perspectives offered from senior Town employees and Town officials are taken in the context of those providing Town services and planning for communities, which may offer additional insight on matters that relate to day-to-day operations. Sometimes this can reveal challenges unseen by those who live and work in the neighbourhood, but are of concern to those who provide the services relied on by the population.

Conversely, the CFG members can tend to be more pragmatic, reflecting on past instances and conveying opinions in an effort to raise the significance of issues weighted towards their personal experiences. This can lead to focused response through the process, where if impacted by land use policy or permissions, effort can be made to help alleviate concerns or conflicts where deemed appropriate.

Planning and Development Services had retained the professional services of Ron Marini and Associates Inc., to conduct Strategic Planning Sessions in advance of the consultation process to create a starting point for open dialogue with the public, community groups and agency partners. Mr. Marini has conducted similar exercises for the majority of the Town's Secondary Plans and once again has facilitated the senior staff session as well as the CFG session.

This report makes effort to contrast the outcomes from the two groups (Senior Staff and the CFG). Planning staff originally felt there was discernible difference in the responses being given during the strategic sessions, but following an exercise where the results were placed side-by-side and parsed into some general themes, there was more similarity revealed than originally thought. Staff even found similarity in the two separate Vision Statements, which again were originally thought to be somewhat divergent. However, after distilling each statement down, with thematics in mind, comparison shows commonality through a paraphrasing lens of the statements provided by the two groups.

Staff have taken the results of the Marini Reports and condensed the responses and used colour to identify and separate out the themes for each of the four categories (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Challenges). The departure only generally

shows itself when arriving at the decision on Priority Goals of the two groups through the voting process on their respective list of goals generated.

Results of the two Strategic Sessions are discussed below and observed in “**Appendices 2, 3 and 4**”. The Consultant’s full reports from the May 9, 2018 and May 17, 2018 sessions are attached as **Appendix “5”** and **Appendix “6”** respectively.

## **SWOC Analysis (Appendix “2”)**

### **Strengths**

As is the case with 3 out of 4 urban areas of Fort Erie, the waterfront plays a significant role in their respective communities, especially one with “Beach” in its name. As a primary attractor or destination in the context of community recreation, tourism, ancillary commercial or natural environment, the waterfront is seen as a significant natural asset, that if leveraged appropriately, can continue to be this community’s natural wonder with strong drawing power.

Both groups recognized the scale and design of the road network, which is in fact reflective of the early urbanist planners, with a tight urban grid combined with the classic radial layout focusing on Queen’s Circle. The streets were noted as being walkable and the lack of major highways adds to the pedestrian experience at certain times of the year.

Both groups recognized the community for its public facilities (arena, library, boat launch, etc;) and variety of recreational opportunities. Also recognized under the heading of Strengths were the downtown core, rich history, the potential for more growth (both residential and commercial), a strong sense of community and housing that was generally considered affordable (compared to other communities), with opportunities for renewal of some of that housing stock.

Additional topics of strength mentioned by the CFG that were not touched on by the staff component, included abundant wildlife and the proximity to major destinations (big city amenity such as major league sports, airports, entertainment, employment, etc;).

Planning Staff’s impression during the session was that the beach/waterfront and the core area where topics that received most of the focus.

Themes extracted from this segment were: **Waterfront, Core Area, Transportation, Institutional, Housing, Heritage, Growth, Community Pride and Participation, Wildlife and Geography.**

### **Weaknesses**

On the other side of Strength comes the perceptions of Weakness and its value to this process is as equally important to examine in a planning exercise of this nature.

Both groups shared in the observation that seasonal or short term accommodation (hotels, motels) for the visiting or tourist component related to the beach destination, fell short of what the two groups felt should be available. Staff interprets this as a shortcoming that if existing, would provide an option to the abundant day-tripper segment to stay a night or a few nights, which in turn could help local commercial viability. Also identified as a weakness was the perceived lack of diverse commercial /

shopping in the immediate core area. Parking to support commercial and the beach was also identified as a weakness.

Staff and the CFG also shared in identifying past decisions of previous generations as lasting irritants to the expectations of today's society. The two most notable were the private ownership of the beach/waterfront and the approval of the Tennis & Yacht Club development on the old amusement park lands that is effectively a gated community, turning its back to the rest of the Crystal Beach neighbourhood.

The latter likely acts as a perpetuating reminder to those who perceive a stigma placed on the residents of Crystal Beach around the same time the park closed and the development was built. The stigma, in relation to economic standing or status, was personified with the installation of the gated community, which created a "have and have-not" sense for an area previously accessible to the residents via the amusement park. That was then, and this is now and almost a complete generation later the lingering feelings remain harboured by those who have lived through it.

Ironically, this day in age, both session groups have identified lack of affordable housing as a weakness. Other shared weaknesses identified by both groups included crumbling or aged infrastructure and the narrow right-of-ways.

Additional, more specific weaknesses were cited by the CFG that included a need for year-round public washrooms and the poor beach water quality that occurs on occasion.

Themes extracted from the Weakness segment included: **Tourism, Social-related, Planning, Infrastructure, Housing, Commercial and Health**

### **Opportunities**

Both groups recognized that new housing opportunities exist on a few notable or known redevelopment sites (Crystal Beach Public School and the 4152 Erie Road site across from Bay Beach). While of interest to the community, these sites have already been redesignated/rezoned for intensification and are the precursor of sorts towards redevelopment opportunities in key location of the community. In these instances, redevelopment or adaptive re-use will see intensification and revitalization that could spur additional private investment for redevelopment in supplying some of the housing form that was identified in the weakness section.

Also shared with optimism between the two groups was capacity for additional tourism / marketing efforts to draw more tourist dollars into the commercial district. Both groups could see development or redevelopment occurring along Erie Road and Derby Road up to Queen's Circle and while uncertain, both would hope the location could retain a healthy percentage of the shops and restaurants being open year-round.

As Council and the community are well aware, \$3 million is being invested into the Bay Beach redevelopment currently underway and can act as an impetus and/or attractor for private sector investment and redevelopment efforts to leverage the beach amenity.

While not identified by staff in the Opportunities segment, the CFG were optimistic that the Secondary Plan could be a tool to help alleviate or generate alternate solutions to the high season parking demand/issues residents express concerns over. Planning staff

anticipate the parking topic to be fairly prevalent in the broader public consultation phases.

Themes extracted from the Opportunities segment included: **Tourism, Downtown Revitalization, general intensification, Community contribution and Parking (essentially peak season).**

### **Challenges**

Both groups identified recurring topics from the Weakness portion of the exercise and in some respects informed their respective goal-setting exercise. The narrow right-of-ways where noted in the staff session while the CFG expanded on that topic to include constraints perceived from the seasonal traffic volume and the road network underperforming during the high season period. The CFG went one step further and even pointed to the arterial of Ridgeway Road (and its multiple streetnames) all the way in from the QEW as being a challenge with single lane traffic direction.

To accompany the challenge identified by the CFG, both groups pointed to parking as a challenge to be looked at; perhaps more adamantly coming from the CFG than the Town staff. Parking has been something identified under both Weakness and Opportunity in addition to the Challenge portion of the exercise, so it is apparent that it remains resonant with participants on both sides of this exercise.

It is also a staff perception that some residents remain resistant to change within the community and would not like to see additional population or more intense development. The CFG listed similar comments that may support staff's perception, by expressing the challenge of co-existing with new residents and also, that lack of services for year-round residents is already an issue. New residents may not be fully aware of that before deciding to make Crystal Beach their home (or summer home). The CFG felt too many derelict buildings exist in the community, which is a reflection on the seasonal nature of the community as a whole.

There appears to be some opposing opinion amongst members of the CFG on growth and rejuvenation, some accepting and some resisting, but this is not uncommon and actually expected when a cross-section of this nature comes together for a specific purpose.

Other stated challenges included, staff noting utility repairs as being costly due to high water table, private beach ownership and difficulty in seeking urban boundary expansion. The CFG, on the other hand, had identified a lack of funding for community improvements and that housing prices have risen sharply in the recent few years.

Themes extracted from the Challenges segment included: **Transportation network, Tourism, Social-related, Planning, Parking, Infrastructure, Growth and Housing.**

### **The Vision (Appendix "3")**

At each session, the respective groups were asked to formulate a vision for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood. Participants were asked for their bird's eye view of the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood scenario. The responses were captured in a random order and appear that way in the consultants reports ("**Appendix 5 & 6**"), however staff

have made an attempt to sort them topically and using colour, grouped them for side-by-side comparative purposes, looking for similarities or shared visions.

As part of the same Appendix, the Vision Statements that resulted are shown under their respective heading. The responses of each group were assessed and grouped by topic as seen in the Appendix, and coloured text was used to demonstrate similarity between the two Vision Statements (on **Appendix “3”** only, not as recited below).

For Council’s immediate reference, the two vision statements generated are as follows:

(Staff version)

***"The Crystal Beach Neighbourhood is a 4 season neighbourhood of choice with a diversity of housing, welcoming to visitors, celebrating its connectivity to the expanded waterfront and the Greater Fort Erie community, where the authenticity of its history is valued and which has a well-defined, thriving, mixed-use commercial area and where quality of life is enhanced by community events and festivals."***

(Crystal Beach Community Focus Group Version)

***"Our ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood is a friendly, social, active, healthy, sustainable, year-round community, attractive to all age groups, easily accessible with a diverse and affordable housing stock attractive to all, with well-maintained green spaces and with public beach and water access, with a thriving downtown core that supports the residents and tourists alike, befitting the South Coast of Canada."***

Staff will be reviewing both of these statements at the next CFG Meeting, following the first Public Information Open House, and have the CFG determine a final, single statement to move forward with.

### **The Goals and Top Priorities (Appendix “4”)**

The next step was to identify goals that would assist in leading towards the envisioned Crystal Beach Neighbourhood. Participants were asked to identify goals that would be prioritized later in the process. **Appendix “4”** provides a listing of the goals generated by the participants.

From the list of goals identified by the groups, participants were requested to identify their top three priorities, by voting on their respective lists generated. The staff selections covered three high level, long term goals that would be of interest to not only the residents, but the much broader public interest. While the staff version shared one of the top three goals with the CFG, the CFG showed a clear focus on Community Improvement and funding over their other cited goals.

There is discernible difference in that the top goals of the Town were actions the Town would generally be leading, whereas the CFG top goals recognized improvement was needed and also recognized that outside interests would need to be engaged to move them forward. Such responsibilities typically fell to the Town, but when it comes to

enticing private investment, there would need to be an attractive atmosphere where private dollars were not being wasted fighting opposing interest and visions.

This is certainly where a Secondary Plan can play a significant role in providing the framework for both policy and lands use. The consultation process is expected to be fairly lengthy as Town staff wishes to have as much input and opinion from the various sectors as feasible before drafting a road map for future growth and rejuvenation. Community buy-in is one of the keys to a successful Plan outcome.

One of the additional steps taken with this Strategic Exercise was to examine how to accomplish the goals and each group used their Top Goal to illustrate how this might be accomplished. These are for discussion only as the suggestions are simply that, suggestions. Essentially the "Action Items" to achieve the desired outcome used a "What?, Who? and When?" approach to responsibility.

In the case of Town staff, the Top Goal being:

***"Acquire the waterfront (entire length of the neighbourhood)"***

The Action Items example generated was:

What	By Whom	By When
Put \$500,000 per year in the base budget for land acquisition	Town of Fort Erie Council through the annual budget by Town Treasurer	Annually. Acquire as properties become available. Assume a time line of 25-30 years
Approach the Region to procure waterfront lands	Planning and Development Services Director	Within 6 months
Acquire waterfront lands as part of any application for planning approval	Town Development Approvals	On-going
Investigate federal funding sources for lakeshore land acquisition	Manager of Community Planning	Within 6 months

For the Community Focus Group, the Top Goal being:

***"Develop a Community Improvement Plan for Crystal Beach"***

The Action Items example generated was:

What	By Whom	By When
Undertake land use evaluation to determine eligible properties to be included in the CIP	Town staff	6-12 months
Create a CIP Incentive Program	Town staff	24 months
Formalize the CIP	Town staff	24 months
Adopt the CIP	Town Council	After Secondary Plan

The above example was intended to illustrate how these two groups' top goals might be achieved through an implementation strategy. Although some of the goals generated could in fact be feasible in a shorter time line, others may take years, if not decades, to realize. It is also important to realize the Secondary Plan is not a vehicle for all of the cited goals. The Secondary Plan's primary function is that of determining lands use. For



example, the CFG goal of “Create a marketing plan for Crystal Beach” is not accomplished with a Secondary Plan, but rather something best suited for the Economic Development and Tourism Corporation (EDTC), in conjunction with the Crystal Beach BIA. Similarly, some of the socially oriented goals are best addressed through other agencies. Vetting of goals will come through the process, after the public have had an opportunity to have a voice on this Strategic Planning direction.

### **Next Steps**

Staff are currently working to arrange the first Public Information Open House to introduce the initiative and to also gather additional input and ideas for Town staff to consider. This will be followed by the second gathering of the CFG to digest the broader public opinion and to fine tune a vision as our benchmark or touchstone to reflect on during each step of the Secondary Plan’s development.

Planning staff are anticipating a mid to late July Open House (details to be finalized) and will follow the Town’s enhanced Notification policy, which goes well beyond the prescribed *Planning Act* requirements.

Staff will also be working to assemble a list of community groups and partners for the purposes of reaching out for comments from their respective membership or authority interests. It can be anticipated that the bulk of the summer months and early fall will be used for consultation, soliciting feedback and information gathering before any draft documents or land use plans begin to emerge for comment.

As a reminder to anyone interested, all key documents and presentations will be made available on the Town’s Crystal Beach Secondary Plan webpage, which will be used for chronology as the process unfolds.

### **Financial/Staffing Implications**

Consultant fees for the Strategic Sessions reported on herein, were part of the Planning and Development Services Operating budget. Otherwise, there are no direct implications, financial or resource related, as it pertains to the outcome of the strategic sessions and this report to Council. Reporting to Council at milestone steps in the process is part of normal administrative protocol when undertaking a Secondary Plan process. The Town also has the benefit of in-house staff capable of carrying this Secondary Plan through its development, approval process and implementation.

### **Policies Affecting Proposal**

The Town Official Plan directs that Neighbourhood Planning be conducted for the municipality’s various neighbourhood areas in order that land use and development can be implemented at a more detailed local level, and that furthermore, these planning exercises result in an amendment (Secondary Plan) to the Town’s Official Plan.

Consultation with neighbourhood residents, property owners and stakeholders is also a requirement of the Town’s Official Plan (Section 5.5.1).

### **Comments from Relevant Departments/Community and Corporate Partners**

Consultations and commenting from these bodies will form part of the process going forward and will be made available in due course.

### **Communicating Results**

This report represents Planning staff's understanding of the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan Strategic Planning exercises that were conducted as part of a process. The results of the consultant's reports have been synthesized in an effort to highlight similar or common themes extracted from the report results. The information will be shared with the Community Focus Group and the broader public (via the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan webpage) as staff prepares to initiate the first Public Information Open House to gather more feedback on the perspective identified herein.

No additional actions in relation to media communication are suggested at this stage of the process.

### **Alternatives**

As an information report conveying findings and outcomes for the general awareness of Council, there are no alternatives being identified, nor necessary.

### **Conclusion**

This report has been prepared for Council's information and awareness on the findings and desired direction from a representative cross section of the people with vested interest in the neighbourhood. Staff will be meeting with key agency stakeholders in the coming weeks to discuss such matters as authority, regulation and design. Staff will be meeting again with the CFG, following the first Public Information Open House for broader community input into the Southend Secondary Plan.

Staff are pleased with the outcome of the two strategic land use planning sessions and are looking forward to the consultations upcoming.

### **Attachments**

**Appendix "1"** – Key Map of Secondary Plan Area

**Appendix "2"** – SWOC Analysis Summary Matrix

**Appendix "3"** – Visioning Summary Matrix

**Appendix "4"** – Priority Goal Summary Matrix

**Appendix "5"** – Marini Report – May 9, 2018 Staff Session

**Appendix "6"** – Marini Report – May 17, 2018 Staff Session



## CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN AREA

**2018 CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN - SWOC ANALYSIS - SIDE-BY-SIDE**  
**(BY RESPECTIVE GROUPS)**

<b>STAFF</b>	<b>COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP</b>
<b>STRENGTHS - THEMED (NOT IN ANY PRIORITY)</b>	<b>STRENGTHS - THEMED (NOT IN ANY PRIORITY)</b>
Beach	Abundant wildlife
Significant public beach	Swimmable beach
Large, private marina	Waterfront
Destination-Boat launch, Buffalo Canoe Club, Bay Beach, Fishing	Beautiful pier
Unique street layout	Walkable streets
Urban grid	No major highways bisecting the community
Public facilities such as arena, library and boat launch	Large variety of recreational options
New elementary school (outside neighbourhood)	Variety of homes
Renewal of housing stock	Affordable housing
Housing is affordable	Rich history
Significant heritage/unique heritage of Crystal Beach	Lack of industry and brownfields
Unique heritage structures	Opportunity for both residential and commercial growth
Density of population	Proximity to major destinations
Good balance of housing and green space	Village atmosphere
Rejuvenating downtown core	'Crystal Beach' a marketable name
Strong sense of community (pride in community)	Businesses who care
Multiplicity of community groups	Main commercial street
	Lots of community participation
	Caring Neighbours

**2018 CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN - SWOC ANALYSIS - SIDE-BY-SIDE**  
**(BY RESPECTIVE GROUPS)**

<b>STAFF</b>	<b>COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP</b>
<b>WEAKNESSES - THEMED (NOT IN ANY PRIORITY)</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES - THEMED (NOT IN ANY PRIORITY)</b>
Seasonal accommodation	Inconsistent marketing of Crystal Beach
Summer parking problem	Stigma
Lack of visitor accommodation	Lack of full-time residents
Quality of tourist accommodation is poor	Private ownership of the pier/beach
Party atmosphere can create neighbourhood issues	Gated community
Change resistance	Crumbling infrastructure
Lack of community-wide focus due to different community groups	Lack of affordable housing
Crystal Beach Tennis/Yacht Club-bad urban structure	Need for year-round public restrooms
Private ownership of beach lands	Poor beach water quality, on occasion
A number of poorly maintained properties	Lack of community level commercial to serve the neighbourhood year-round
Building form issues-lack of historic, municipal oversight	
Few opportunities for Greenfield development	
Aged infrastructure	
Narrow rights-of-way	
Lack of affordable seniors' housing	
Lack of diverse shopping	
Seasonal businesses	

**2018 CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN - SWOC ANALYSIS - SIDE-BY-SIDE**  
**(BY RESPECTIVE GROUPS)**

<b>STAFF</b>	<b>COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP</b>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES - THEMED (NOT IN ANY PRIORITY)</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES - THEMED (NOT IN ANY PRIORITY)</b>
Authentic themes to drive programmes	Opportunity to connect to Ridgeway while retaining Crystal Beach's cultural identity
2 elementary school sites to be sold for redevelopment	Secondary plan an opportunity to develop new housing
Land sale of 4152 Erie Rd.	Condominium housing
Bay Beach as a community regenerator	Secondary plan can identify solutions to parking needs
Derby Road as an opportunity for intensification/commercial revitalization (potential urban renewal)	Solutions to parking can be through a seasonal shuttle bus service
Bay Beach as a significant tourism draw	Good untapped commercial in the commercial core
Boat slip as a attraction for tourists/boaters/fishing festivals	Opportunity to create a year-round community focus at Queen's Circle
	Tourism
	Unique festivals and events

2018 CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN - SWOC ANALYSIS - SIDE-BY-SIDE  
(BY RESPECTIVE GROUPS)

STAFF	COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP
CHALLENGES - THEMED (NOT IN ANY PRIORITY)	CHALLENGES - THEMED (NOT IN ANY PRIORITY)
Narrow rights-of-way	Seasonal traffic
Enough beach to spur tourism	Transportation network not accommodating seasonal traffic
Resistance to change	One lane road into Crystal Beach (Sodom Road)
Private ownership beach lands	Co-existence with new residents
Adequacy of visitor parking	Lack of services to accommodate year-round residents
Public utility repairs expensive due to high water table	Abandoned buildings/derelict properties
Lack of urban land supply/expansion of urban boundary difficult	Lack of accessible parking to support rejuvenated commercial area
	Significant increase in the price of housing
	Lack of funding to facilitate community improvements

## CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN STRATEGIC PLANNING VISIONING EXERCISE

CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN STRATEGIC SESSION FOR STAFF MAY 9, 2018	CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP SESSION MAY 17, 2018
(asked what is seen in the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood)	(asked what is seen in the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood)
Happy people	Parks with children playing
Children laughing and playing	People walking along the entire beach front
Music	Boardwalk with commercial activity with public washrooms
People talking to folks on porches	Seasonal docking to accommodate fishers/boaters
Friendly people	Gated community to the neighbourhood now accessible for the public, including the pier
People walking on beach	Sporting events on the beach
High use of the water	Year-round activities e.g. ice boating
Private pier as a public access and venue	All beach is in public ownership
Beach publicly accessible	Full stores with heavy pedestrian traffic
People on streets-walking along streets to restaurants and shops	Waterfront commercial services
Patios	Commercial core as a hub for the neighbourhood
Street vendors	Folks spending their time in Crystal Beach as opposed to 'at the beach'
All development is integrated with the street	Benches on streets
Pedestrian scale redevelopment/infilling	Create continuity between Bay Beach and Downtown Core on "Hill Cottagers" lands in the form of retail/recreational/public/mixed use development
Mixed use building in Core Mixed Use Area	Vibrant colours, public art, community vibrancy
Colour/dynamism	Queen's Circle maintained but a community focus
All season neighbourhood activity	More community year round events geared to all age groups
Festivals on the beach/in parks	Alternative energy sources
Smell of clean air	Visible correct use of waste-compost/waste diversion
Complete/safe streets	Containers for dog waste
Rich, thick, tree canopy	Continuous sidewalks
	Cyclists on protected bike lanes connected to the Friendship Trail
	Smoothly paved roads
	Parking lots away from the beach
	Accessible parking near the beach
	Trolleys/small tour buses serving Crystal Beach
	An identified Crystal Beach architectural style
	Celebrating Crystal Beach's history

VISION STATEMENT - STAFF	VISION STATEMENT - COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP
"The Crystal Beach Neighbourhood is a <b>4 season neighbourhood</b> of choice <b>with a diversity of housing</b> , welcoming to visitors, celebrating its <b>connectivity to the expanded waterfront</b> and the Greater Fort Erie community, where the authenticity of its history is valued and <b>which has a well-defined, thriving, mixed-use commercial area</b> and where <b>quality of life is enhanced by community events and festivals.</b> "	"Our ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood is a <b>friendly, social, active, healthy, sustainable, year-round community</b> , attractive to all age groups, easily accessible with a <b>diverse and affordable housing stock attractive to all</b> , with well-maintained green spaces and <b>with public beach and water access</b> , <b>with a thriving downtown core</b> that supports the residents and tourists alike, befitting the South Coast of Canada."



## CRYSTAL BEACH SECONDARY PLAN STRATEGIC PLANNING GOAL-SETTING COMPARISON

Goals - Staff			Focus for Action
Goal:	Acquire the waterfront (entire length of the neighbourhood)	Policy	
Goal:	Define a Core Mixed Use area	Planning	
Goal:	Create a policy structure that supports the vision	Policy	
Goal:	Identify nodes and areas to allow residential intensification	Planning	
Goal:	Prepare an urban design document for the Core Mixed Use Area that values the history	Urban Design	
Goal:	Develop an urban design document for Crystal Beach	Urban Design	
Goal:	Develop a parking strategy focussed on the commercial core seasonal traffic	Planning +	
Goal:	Empower the volunteer groups of Crystal Beach to coordinate and support community events	Community	
Goal:	Community Improvement Plan programmes be developed for downtown and investigate a Community Improvement Plan for regeneration and redevelopment of sites	Planning	
Goal:	Create a Community Improvement Plan to promote the conversion of seasonal housing to all season housing	Planning	
Goal:	Identify the appropriate group to promote tourism in Crystal Beach	Administrative	
Goal:	Promote the reintegration of gated communities with the neighbourhood	Community	

Goals - Community Focus Group			Focus for Action
Goal:	Achieve community buy-in	Policy	
Goal:	Secure funding	Administrative	
Goal:	Cost the public elements of the vision	Administrative	
Goal:	Prepare architectural renderings of a desired core area, vacant lands and selected areas of the neighbourhood	Urban Design	
Goal:	Investigate a partnership between the government and private owners of the pier	Administrative	
Goal:	Set up a timetable related to goals	Planning +	
Goal:	Poll residents to determine the kinds of activity they would like in Crystal Beach	Community	
Goal:	Create a marketing plan for Crystal Beach Neighbourhood	EDTC / BIA	
Goal:	Develop a parking and shuttle plan for Crystal Beach Neighbourhood	Planning +	
Goal:	Investigate creating incentives to encourage private sector investment	Planning	
Goal:	Develop a Community Improvement Plan for Crystal Beach	Planning	
Goal:	Investigate densities for the neighbourhood	Planning	
Goal:	Investigate feasibility of a seniors' home for the neighbourhood	Planning +	
Goal:	Ensure the neighbourhood plan caters to all age groups	Planning	
Goal:	Create a recreational connection from Friendship Trail to Crystal Beach	Planning	
Goal:	Define the limits of the Commercial Mixed-Use Core	Planning	

### TOP GOALS - STAFF

Top Goal:	Acquire the waterfront (entire length of the neighbourhood)	Policy
2nd	Develop an urban design document for Crystal Beach	Urban Design
3rd	Community Improvement Plan programmes be developed for downtown and investigate a Community Improvement Plan for regeneration and redevelopment of sites	Planning

### TOP GOALS - COMMUNITY FOCUS GROUP

Top Goal:	Develop a Community Improvement Plan for Crystal Beach	Planning
2nd	Secure funding	Administrative
3rd	Investigate creating incentives to encourage private sector investment	Planning

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**Report of the May 9, 2018 Strategic  
Planning Session with the Town of Fort  
Erie Representatives Concerning the  
Crystal Beach Neighbourhood  
Secondary Plan**

**May 14, 2018**

**Ron Marini and Associates Inc**

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### APPENDIX “A”-List of Attendees

# **Report of the May 9, 2018 Strategic Planning Session with the Town of Fort Erie Representatives Concerning the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood Secondary Plan.**

## **Executive Summary**

**The Town of Fort Erie's Planning and Development Services Department is initiating the preparation of a detailed land use plan (known as a secondary plan), for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood of the Town. This plan is intended to articulate the land use intentions of the community and the Town of Fort Erie. To assist in this undertaking, the Town of Fort Erie retained the services of Ron Marini and Associates Inc., a community planning firm, to facilitate a strategic planning exercise with political and staff representatives. This session was held at the Town offices on Wednesday, May 9, 2018 and involved a focus group comprising various representatives from the Town. (Please see the attached Appendix "A" for a list of attendees). This report documents the discussion which occurred at that session. The focus group undertook an assessment of the current situation in the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood through a review of the area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges.**



**The existence of a beach was seen as strength, while an identified weakness was seasonal business. The group viewed Bay Beach as an opportunity to regenerate the community, while resistance to change was viewed as a challenge.**

**Subsequent to the aforementioned assessments, the group undertook a visioning exercise whereby the members articulated elements of the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood culminating in the following vision statement:**

**“The Crystal Beach Neighbourhood is a 4 season neighbourhood of choice with a diversity of housing, welcoming to visitors, celebrating its connectivity to the expanded waterfront and the greater Fort Erie community, where the authenticity of its history is valued, and which has a well-defined, thriving, mixed-use commercial area and where quality of life is enhanced by community events and festivals.”**

**Upon articulation of the vision statement, the participants developed a list of goals that needed to be met if the foregoing vision was to become reality. The goals were then prioritized in order to give a clear indication as to what the focus group viewed as being most important in order to bring the vision statement closer to reality. The primary goal identified by the focus group was to acquire the waterfront (The entire length of the neighbourhood.)**

**Going forward in the strategic planning process will involve a similar session with a community focus group together with**

**elected representatives and staff of the Town of Fort Erie scheduled for May 17, 2018.**

**Ron Marini and Associates Inc. are grateful to Mr. Richard Brady, MCIP, RPP, Director of Planning and Development Services for the Town of Fort Erie for this opportunity to assist in the development of a clear vision with firm goals to advance the preparation of the secondary plan for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood. We are confident that this early work will result in a sound community based secondary plan.**

*Ronald M. Marini .*

**Ronald M. Marini  
Ron Marini and Associates Inc.  
May 14, 2018**



## **Report of the May 9, 2018 Strategic Planning Session with the Town of Fort Erie Representatives Concerning the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood Secondary Plan.**

### **Introduction:**

The Town of Fort Erie retained the services of Ron Marini and Associates Inc., a community planning firm to facilitate a strategic planning exercise as an initial step in the preparation by the Town of a detailed land use plan known as a secondary plan for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood. The purpose of the strategic planning exercise was to articulate at a very early stage, the vision and goals for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood to be used as base elements in the development of the secondary plan. The strategic planning exercise involves two sessions: the first with representatives of the Town of Fort Erie and the second with community members from the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood and Town of Fort Erie elected and staff representatives. The initial strategic planning session was held at the Town of Fort Erie Offices on Wednesday, May 9, 2018. (See Appendix for a list of attendees). Over the course of the day, the focus group developed a vision statement for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood and then developed a series of goals which, if implemented, would result in bringing the vision closer to reality. Subsequently, the focus group determined the priorities for the identified goals and created an action plan to implement the preferred goal.

### **The Crystal Beach Neighbourhood Assessment Exercise:**

The initial phase of the strategic planning exercise was to undertake an assessment of the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood and for that purpose, the group identified the neighbourhood's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. Following is a summary of that work.

## Crystal Beach Neighbourhood

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beach</li> <li>• Strong sense of community (pride in community)</li> <li>• Multiplicity of community groups</li> <li>• Density of population</li> <li>• Good balance of housing and green space</li> <li>• Unique street layout</li> <li>• Urban grid</li> <li>• Rejuvenating downtown core</li> <li>• Significant public beach</li> <li>• Significant heritage/unique heritage of Chrystal Beach</li> <li>• Unique heritage structures</li> <li>• Public facilities such as arena, library and boat launch</li> <li>• Large, private marina</li> <li>• Destination-Boat launch, Buffalo Canoe Club, Bay Beach, Fishing</li> <li>• New elementary school (outside neighbourhood)</li> <li>• Renewal of housing stock</li> <li>• Housing is affordable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of diverse shopping</li> <li>• Seasonal businesses</li> <li>• Crystal Beach Tennis/Yacht Club-bad urban structure</li> <li>• Private ownership of beach lands</li> <li>• Aged infrastructure</li> <li>• Seasonal accommodation</li> <li>• A number of poorly maintained properties</li> <li>• Summer parking problem</li> <li>• Change resistance</li> <li>• Lack of visitor accommodation</li> <li>• Quality of tourist accommodation is poor</li> <li>• Narrow rights-of-way</li> <li>• Building form issues-lack of historic, municipal oversight</li> <li>• Few opportunities for Greenfield development</li> <li>• Party atmosphere can create neighbourhood issues</li> <li>• Lack of community-wide focus due to different community groups</li> <li>• Lack of affordable seniors' housing</li> </ul>



OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bay Beach as a community regenerator</li> <li>• Bay Beach as a significant tourism draw</li> <li>• Derby Road as an opportunity for intensification /commercial revitalization (potential urban renewal)</li> <li>• 2 elementary school sites to be sold for redevelopment</li> <li>• Land sale of 4152 Erie Rd.</li> <li>• Boat slip as a attraction for tourists/boaters/fishing-festivals</li> <li>• Authentic themes to drive programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resistance to change</li> <li>• Enough beach to spur tourism</li> <li>• Adequacy of visitor parking</li> <li>• Public utility repairs expensive due to high water table</li> <li>• Lack of urban land supply/expansion of urban boundary difficult</li> <li>• Narrow rights-of-way</li> <li>• Private ownership of beach lands</li> </ul>

### **Developing a Vision for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood:**

Upon the completion of the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood Assessment Exercise, the group then proceeded with work leading to the development of a vision for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood.

Utilizing a scenario of the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood, the members then articulated their views of what elements comprised their vision. The following elements were identified:

- ❖ People on streets-walking along streets to restaurants and shops
- ❖ Patios
- ❖ People walking on beach
- ❖ Colour/dynamism

- ❖ Happy people
- ❖ High use of the water
- ❖ Children laughing and playing
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Rich, thick, tree canopy
- ❖ Smell of clean air
- ❖ All development is integrated with the street
- ❖ People talking to folks on porches
- ❖ Friendly people
- ❖ Complete/safe streets
- ❖ Street vendors
- ❖ All season neighbourhood activity
- ❖ Festivals on the beach/in parks
- ❖ Private pier as a public access and venue
- ❖ Beach publicly accessible
- ❖ Pedestrian scale redevelopment/infilling
- ❖ Mixed use building in Core Mixed Use Area

From the above work, the group formulated the following vision statement for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood:

### **VISION FOR THE CRYSTAL BEACH NEIGHBOURHOOD:**

**“The Chrystal Beach Neighbourhood is a 4 season neighbourhood of choice with a diversity of housing, welcoming to visitors, celebrating its connectivity to the expanded waterfront and the Greater Fort Erie community, where the authenticity of its history is valued and which has a well-defined, thriving, mixed-use commercial area and where quality of life is enhanced by community events and festivals.”**



**Goals to Achieve the Vision For The Chrystal Beach Neighbourhood:**

Upon identification of the vision statement, the group then turned its attention towards identifying the goals that needed to be met if the vision was to be realized. The following goals were identified:

***Goal 1: Acquire the waterfront (entire length of the neighbourhood)***

***Goal 2: Define a Core Mixed Use area***

***Goal 3: Create a policy structure that supports the vision***

***Goal 4: Identify nodes and areas to allow residential intensification***

***Goal 5: Prepare an urban design document for the Core Mixed Use Area that values the history***

***Goal 6: Develop an urban design document for Crystal Beach***

***Goal 7: Develop a parking strategy focussed on the commercial core seasonal traffic***

***Goal 8: Empower the volunteer groups of Crystal Beach to co-ordinate and support community events***

***Goal 9: Community Improvement Plan programmes be developed for downtown and investigate a Community Improvement Plan for regeneration and redevelopment of sites***

***Goal 10: Create a Community Improvement Plan to promote the conversion of seasonal housing to all season housing***

***Goal/11: Identify the appropriate group to promote tourism in Crystal Beach***

**Goal 12: Promote the reintegration of gated communities with the neighbourhood**

**Priority Goal for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood:**

Utilizing a voting mechanism the focus group selected the following as the priority goal:

**Acquire the waterfront (entire length of the neighbourhood)**

**Comment on Goals and Priorities:**

The goals give the context for the preparation of the secondary plan and provide direction to address other issues of relevance to the neighbourhood. It is intended that all of the goals will be addressed through the neighbourhood planning exercise, not only the priority goal.

**Action Plan to Achieve a Stated Goal:**

The group was directed to create a plan of action to implement the first priority goal. This action plan answered the questions, what, who and by when. The following is the result of this exercise.

**ACTION PLAN FOR PRIORITY GOAL  
“Acquire the waterfront (entire length of the  
neighbourhood)”**

WHAT	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
Put \$500,000.00 per year in the base budget for land acquisition	Town of Fort Erie Council through the annual budget by Town Treasurer	Annually Acquire as properties become available Assume a time line of 25-30 years



WHAT	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
Approach the Region to procure waterfront lands	Planning and Development Services Director	Within 6 months
Acquire waterfront lands as part of any application for planning approval	Town Development Approvals	On-going
Investigate federal funding sources for lakeshore land acquisition	Manager of Community Planning	Within 6 months

### **Next Steps:**

A second strategic planning session involving community representatives from the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood along with representatives from the Town of Fort Erie is scheduled for Thursday, May 17, 2018. The output from the second session will be important as it will indicate to the Town the goals and priorities of the community as Town Staff initiate the preparation of the secondary plan for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood.

### **Concluding Comments:**

Ron Marini and Associates Inc. are grateful to the Town of Fort Erie and especially Richard Brady, MCIP, RPP, Director of Planning and Development Services for this opportunity to assist in the development of a clear vision with firm goals leading to the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood. The vitality and enthusiasm of the participants at the May 9, 2018 session showed that each member is committed to making the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood an even better place.

*Ronald M. Marini*

Ronald M. Marini  
Ron Marini and Associates Inc.  
May 14, 2018

## **Appendix “A”**

### **Attendees of May 9, 2018 Strategic Planning Session (Full or Part Time Attendees)**

#### **Fort Erie Council Reps**

Wayne Redekop (Mayor)

#### **Fort Erie Staff**

Carol Schofield-Clerk

Lindsay Richardson-Senior Planner

Doug Campbell-Mngr. Roads and Fleet

Geoff Stephenson-By-law Enforcement

Jason Marr-Mngr. Engineering

Adam Allcock-Engineering

Jonathan Janzen-Dir. Corp. Services-Treasurer

Keegan Gennings-CBO

Rick Brady-Director of Planning and Development Services

Kira Dolch-Associate Director of Planning and Development Services

Signe Hansen-Mngr. Of Community Planning

Sean Hutton-Mngr. Parks and Facilities

Jane Davies-Mngr. Museums and Cultural Services

Chris Millar-Neighbourhood Planner

Matt Kernahan-Development Planner

Facilitator: Ron Marini, Ron Marini and Associates Inc.

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**Report of the May 17, 2018 Strategic  
Planning Session with the Crystal  
Beach and Town of Fort Erie  
Representatives Concerning the  
Crystal Beach Secondary Plan**

**May 21, 2018**

**Ron Marini and Associates Inc**

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### APPENDIX “A”-List of Attendees



## **Report of the May 17, 2018 Strategic Planning Session with the Crystal Beach and Town of Fort Erie Representatives Concerning the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan**

### **Executive Summary**

**The Town of Fort Erie's Planning and Development Services Department is initiating the preparation of a detailed land use plan (known as a secondary plan), for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood of the Town. This secondary plan is intended to articulate the land uses for the community to the planning horizon of 2041. To assist in this undertaking, the Town of Fort Erie retained the services of Ron Marini and Associates Inc., a community planning firm, to facilitate a strategic planning exercise with a Council-selected community focus group and Town of Fort Erie political representatives. (Please see the attached Appendix "A" for a list of attendees). This session was held at the Town offices on Thursday May 17, 2018. This report documents the discussion which occurred at that session.**

**The focus group undertook an assessment of the current situation in the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood through a review of the area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. The Lake Erie waterfront was seen as strength, while an identified weakness was the lack of affordable housing. The group viewed the secondary plan as an opportunity to develop**

**new housing, while the existence of abandoned buildings and unkempt properties was viewed as a challenge.**

**Subsequent to the aforementioned assessments, the group undertook a visioning exercise whereby the members articulated elements of the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood culminating in the following vision statement:**

**“Our ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood is a friendly, social, active, healthy, sustainable, year-round community, attractive to all age groups, easily accessible with a diverse and affordable housing stock for all, with well-maintained green spaces and with public beach and water access, with a thriving downtown core that supports residents and tourists alike, befitting the South Coast of Canada.”**

**Upon articulation of the vision statement, the participants developed a list of goals that needed to be met if the foregoing vision was to become reality. The goals were then prioritized in order to give a clear indication as to what the focus group viewed as being most important in order to bring the vision statement closer to reality. The primary goal identified by the focus group was to develop a Community Improvement Plan for Crystal Beach. Finally, the group identified an action plan designed to implement the above-stated primary goal.**

**With the development of the vision and goals for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood, the Town will now embark on the preparation of the secondary plan, a plan which will strive to**

**address land use related matters in support of the vision articulated at this focus group session.**

**Ron Marini and Associates Inc. are grateful to Mr. Richard Brady, MCIP, RPP, Director of Planning and Development Services for the Town of Fort Erie for this opportunity to assist in the development of a clear vision with firm goals to advance the preparation of the secondary plan for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood. We are confident that this early work will result in a sound community based secondary plan.**



**Ronald M. Marini  
Ron Marini and Associates Inc.  
May 21, 2018**



## **Report of the May 17, 2018 Strategic Planning Session with the Crystal Beach and Town of Fort Erie Representatives Concerning the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan**

### **Introduction:**

The Town of Fort Erie retained the services of Ron Marini and Associates Inc., a community planning firm to facilitate a strategic planning exercise as an initial step in the preparation by the Town of a detailed land use plan known as a secondary plan for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood. The purpose of the strategic planning exercise was to articulate at a very early stage, the vision and goals for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood to be used as base elements in the development of the secondary plan. The strategic planning exercise involved two sessions: the first with representatives of the Town of Fort Erie and the second with community members from the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood and Town of Fort Erie elected representatives. The initial strategic planning session was held at the Town of Fort Erie Offices on Wednesday, May 9, 2018 with the second session held on May 17, 2018 and which is the subject of this report. (See Appendix "A" for a list of attendees at the May 17 session). Over the course of the day, the focus group developed a vision statement for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood and then developed a series of goals which, if implemented, would result in bringing the vision closer to reality. Subsequently, the focus group determined the priorities for the identified goals and created an action plan to implement the preferred goal.

### **Crystal Beach Neighbourhood Assessment Exercise:**

The initial phase of the strategic planning exercise was to undertake an assessment of the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood and for that purpose the group identified the neighbourhood's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. Following is a summary of that work.

## Crystal Beach Neighbourhood

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waterfront</li> <li>• Walkable streets</li> <li>• Rich history</li> <li>• Swimmable beach</li> <li>• Variety of homes</li> <li>• Village atmosphere</li> <li>• Lack of industry and brownfields</li> <li>• Beautiful pier</li> <li>• Lots of community participation</li> <li>• Large variety of recreational options</li> <li>• No major highways bisecting the community</li> <li>• 'Crystal Beach' a marketable name</li> <li>• Caring Neighbours</li> <li>• Businesses who care</li> <li>• Abundant wildlife</li> <li>• Proximity to major destinations</li> <li>• Affordable housing</li> <li>• Opportunity for both residential and commercial growth</li> <li>• Main street commercial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of affordable housing</li> <li>• Crumbling infrastructure</li> <li>• Lack of community-level commercial to serve the neighbourhood year-round</li> <li>• Lack of full-time residents</li> <li>• Inconsistent marketing of Crystal Beach</li> <li>• Stigma</li> <li>• Private ownership of the pier/beach</li> <li>• Gated community</li> <li>• Need for year-round public restrooms</li> <li>• Poor beach water quality, on occasion</li> </ul>



OPPORTUNITIES	CHALLENGES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary plan an opportunity to develop new housing</li> <li>• Good untapped commercial in the commercial core</li> <li>• Secondary plan can identify solutions to parking needs</li> <li>• Solutions to parking can be through a seasonal shuttle bus service</li> <li>• Opportunity to connect to Ridgeway while retaining Crystal Beach's cultural identity</li> <li>• Tourism</li> <li>• Unique festivals and events</li> <li>• Opportunity to create a year-round community focus at Queen's Circle</li> <li>• Condominium housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-existence with new residents</li> <li>• Abandoned buildings/derelict properties</li> <li>• Seasonal traffic</li> <li>• Transportation network not accommodating seasonal traffic</li> <li>• Lack of funding to facilitate community improvements</li> <li>• Lack of services to accommodate year-round residents</li> <li>• Significant increase in the price of housing</li> <li>• One lane road into Crystal Beach (Sodom Road)</li> <li>• Lack of accessible parking to support rejuvenated commercial area</li> </ul>

**Developing a Vision for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood:**

Upon the completion of the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood Assessment Exercise, the group then proceeded with work leading to the development of a vision for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood.

Utilizing a scenario of the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood, the members then articulated their views of what elements comprised their vision. The following elements were identified:

- ❖ Parks with children playing
- ❖ Continuous sidewalks
- ❖ People walking along the entire beach front
- ❖ Cyclists on protected bike lanes connected to the Friendship Trail
- ❖ Full stores with heavy pedestrian traffic
- ❖ Waterfront commercial services
- ❖ Smoothly paved roads
- ❖ Parking lots away from the beach
- ❖ Accessible parking near the beach
- ❖ Boardwalk with commercial activity with public washrooms
- ❖ Seasonal docking to accommodate fishers/boaters
- ❖ Gated community to the neighbourhood now accessible for the public, including the pier
- ❖ Commercial core as a hub for the neighbourhood
- ❖ Queen's Circle maintained but a community focus
- ❖ Create continuity between Bay Beach and Downtown Core on "Hill Cottagers' " lands in the form of retail/recreational/public/mixed use development
- ❖ Sporting events on the beach
- ❖ Folks spending their time in Crystal Beach as opposed to 'at the beach'
- ❖ Trolleys/small tour buses serving Crystal Beach
- ❖ Benches on streets
- ❖ Year-round activities e.g. ice boating
- ❖ All beach is in public ownership
- ❖ Alternative energy sources
- ❖ An identified Crystal Beach architectural style



- ❖ **Visible correct use of waste-compost/waste diversion**
- ❖ **Containers for dog waste**
- ❖ **Celebrating Crystal Beach's history**
- ❖ **More community year round events geared to all age groups**
- ❖ **Vibrant colours, public art, community vibrancy**

**From the above work, the group formulated the following vision statement for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood:**

### **A VISION FOR THE CRYSTAL BEACH NEIGHBOURHOOD:**

***“Our ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood is a friendly, social, active, healthy, sustainable, year-round community, attractive to all age groups, easily accessible with a diverse and affordable housing stock attractive to all, with well-maintained green spaces and with public beach and water access, with a thriving downtown core that supports the residents and tourists alike, befitting the South Coast of Canada.”***

#### **Goals to Achieve the Vision For The Chrystal Beach Neighbourhood:**

**Upon identification of the vision statement, the group then turned its attention towards identifying the goals that needed to be met if the vision was to be realized. The following goals were identified:**

***Goal 1: Achieve community buy-in***

***Goal 2: Secure funding***



***Goal 3: Cost the public elements of the vision***

***Goal 4: Prepare architectural renderings of a desired core area, vacant lands and selected areas of the neighbourhood***

***Goal 5: Investigate a partnership between the government and private owners of the pier***

***Goal 6: Set up a timetable related to goals***

***Goal 7: Poll residents to determine the kinds of activity they would like in Crystal Beach***

***Goal 8: Create a marketing plan for Crystal Beach Neighbourhood***

***Goal 9: Develop a parking and shuttle plan for Crystal Beach Neighbourhood***

***Goal 10: Investigate creating incentives to encourage private sector investment***

***Goal 11: Develop a Community Improvement Plan for Crystal Beach***

***Goal 12: Investigate densities for the neighbourhood***

***Goal 13: Investigate feasibility of a seniors' home for the neighbourhood***

***Goal 14: Ensure the neighbourhood plan caters to all age groups***

***Goal 15: Create a recreational connection from Friendship Trail to Crystal Beach***

***Goal 16: Define the limits of the Commercial Mixed-Use Core***

**Priority Goal for the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood:**

Utilizing a voting mechanism the focus group selected the following as the priority goal:

**Develop a Community Improvement Plan for Crystal Beach**

The second most popular goal was Goal 2: Secure funding with 8 votes while 6 voted for Goal 10: Investigate creating incentives to encourage private sector investment

**Comment on Goals and Priorities:**

The goals give the context for the preparation of the secondary plan and provide direction to address other issues of relevance to the neighbourhood. It is intended that all of the goals will be addressed through the neighbourhood planning exercise, not only the priority goal.

**Action Plan to Achieve a Stated Goal:**

The group was directed to create a plan of action to implement the priority goal. This action plan answered the questions, what, who and by when. The following is the result of this exercise.

**ACTION PLAN FOR PRIORITY GOAL**  
**“Develop a Community Improvement Plan for Crystal Beach”**

WHAT	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
Undertake land use evaluation to determine eligible properties to be included in a CIP	Chris Millar	6-12 months
WHAT	BY WHOM	BY WHEN



WHAT	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
Create a CIP incentive program	Chris Millar	24 months
Formalize a CIP	Chris Millar	24 months
Adopt CIP	Town Council	After secondary plan

**Next Steps:**

The strategic focus session of May 17, 2018 has been instrumental in giving direction in the preparation of the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan. It is intended that the neighbourhood focus group will continue to be a resource and a respected participant in the development of the Crystal Beach Secondary Plan.

**Concluding Comments:**

Ron Marini and Associates Inc. are grateful to the Town of Fort Erie and especially Richard Brady, MCIP, RPP, Director of Planning and Development Services for this opportunity to assist in the development of a clear vision with firm goals leading to the ideal Crystal Beach Neighbourhood. We also wish to thank the folks from Chrystal Beach who so generously gave their time to participate in the focus group session on May 17, 2018. Their vitality and enthusiasm showed that each member is committed to making the Crystal Beach Neighbourhood an even better place.



Ronald M. Marini  
Ron Marini and Associates Inc.  
May 21, 2018

## **Appendix “A”**

### **Attendees of May 21, 2018 Strategic Planning Session (Full or Part Time Attendees)**

#### **Fort Erie Council Reps**

Wayne Redekop (Mayor)

Councillor Don Lubberts-Ward 5

#### **Crystal Beach Neighbourhood Representatives**

Kate Mullane-Resident

Stu McLeod-Resident

Hope Elliott-Resident

Pat Richardson-Resident

Ruth Bruyns-Resident

Leah Feor-Resident

Bill Cutler-Resident

Louann Walker-Resident

Mike Read-Resident

Jane Seaborne-Davies-Resident

Eleni Tataridis-Resident

Mike Hopper-Business Owner

Phil Smith-Business Owner

Kirk Fretz-Business Owner

#### **Town of Fort Erie Representatives**

Signe Hansen-Mngr. Of Community Planning-Observer

Chris Millar-Neighbourhood Planner-Observer

Nicholas Kuhl-Planning Student-Observer

**Regional Planning Observers**

Kirsten McCauley-Observer

Fabian Serra-Observer

Facilitator: Ron Marini, Ron Marini and Associates Inc.