

Port Elgin Toolkit





We acknowledge the traditional lands and treaty territory of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation, which consists of the Chippewas of Saugeen and the Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation.

We understand this land holds immense significance to the people of Saugeen Ojibway Nation. We appreciate those who live and work alongside us today and who continue the traditions of their ancestors as stewards of the land we are privileged to inhabit. We thank them for the contributions they have made in both caring for the land and in shaping this community.

We commit to truth and reconciliation. To acknowledging the truth about what happened to Indigenous peoples because of colonization, and to reconciliation — which begins with each and every one of us.

As a local government and public organization, we are dedicated to learning about Indigenous culture, to fostering a better relationship with First Nations and their people, and we commit ourselves to actions that move us forward on a path to healing along with the Saugeen Ojibway Nation.

Introduction

Port Elgin is located within the Town of Saugeen Shores on the beautiful shoreline of Lake Huron in Ontario, Canada. The Town includes Port Elgin, Southampton and Saugeen Township. The community has a strong commercial backbone including close proximity to major industries related to nuclear power. Port Elgin's downtown core is situated along the Highway 21 corridor — meaning substantial volumes of travelers, both residents and visitors, pass through year-round.

Since the early 1900's, Port Elgin has been a popular summer beach vacation destination offering campgrounds, cottages and cabins to the abundance of families who visit each year. Boasting 6 distinct beaches and a bustling downtown core, families can easily walk throughout the entire community and stop at many scenic vistas along the way. Extensive trail networks including the Saugeen Rail Trail and close proximity to MacGregor Point Provincial Park link outdoor recreation activities. Port Elgin is also renowned for its spectacular sunsets, all within view from an accessible expansive shoreline. Port Elgin's visiting population is an integral component of the town's economy, annually attracting thousands of seasonal visitors to the area who shop and spend money in the community.



Port Elgin's annual Fall Pumpkinfest Festival (started in 1986) has grown and expanded its seasonal offerings and attractions. Port Elgin's Pumpkinfest is part of the "World Pumpkin Confederation" featuring an official weight station for oversized vegetables. The 2-day festival boasts an annual visitation of over 50,000 people who travel to see the world class pumpkins on display. The Festival has received notable recognition as being part of the broader tourism product offering, including winning the "People's choice award" for Best Festival in Ontario by Events Ontario. The festival continues to win provincial awards and recognition as one of the Top 100 Events in Ontario.

The Town of Saugeen Shores strives to meet its goals of providing a place for business, tourism, families and retirees; ensuring growth and development are accompanied by cultural, social, environment and economic benefits. While being aware of current heritage and physical assets, Port Elgin cherishes the uniqueness of being a family friendly waterfront community.

Visitors and residents alike are attracted to places that offer unique and exciting experiences and are more likely to return to places where they have experienced this

first hand. They stay longer, spend more, return to and speak well about places where they form positive impressions.

While preserving the identity and diversity of each community that forms Saugeen Shores (while enhancing their unity) is acknowledged, the goal of this Toolkit is to showcase Port Elgin's unique Brand for the purpose of creating a distinct destination.



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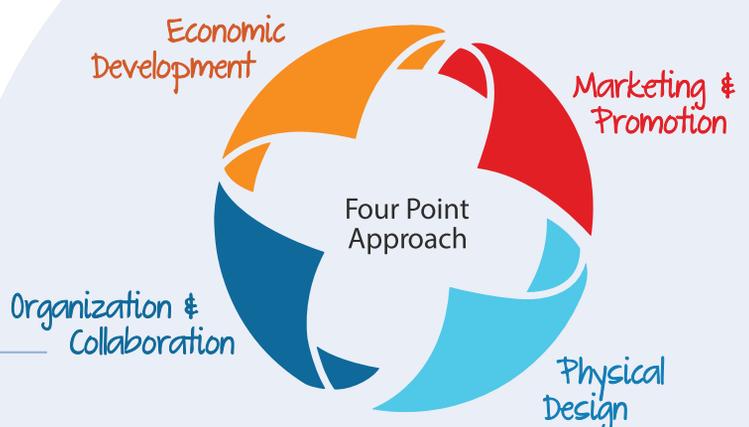
Why Mainstreets Matter

We all know where our mainstreets are, but do we know what they are and why they matter? Whether they are named First Avenue or King Street, are a County Road or Provincial Highway, what they represent is universal. Mainstreet is the economic engine, the big stage and the core of the community. Bruce County's downtowns represent two-thirds of our commercial assessment value and are the main point of contact with tourism dollars — our second largest industry. Our mainstreets tell us who we are, who we were and how the past has shaped us. We do not go to our commercial strips to learn about our past, explore our culture or discover our identity. Our mainstreets are the places of collective memory where people come together.

The Main Street Program was developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in the United States, but focuses on a destination-oriented downtown improvement agenda that embraces Brand development to create unique and successful downtowns.

So what is mainstreet? When we talk about mainstreet, we are thinking of real places doing real work to revitalize their economies and preserve their community's character. The Main Street Four-Point Approach® is a preservation-based economic development tool that enables communities to revitalize downtowns and neighbourhood business districts by leveraging local assets—from historic, cultural and architectural resources to local enterprises and community pride. The Four-Point Approach® is the springboard for the Community Toolkits and is a comprehensive strategy that addresses the variety of issues and problems that challenge traditional downtowns.

Main Street Four Point Approach



The Role of...

The Business

- Be proud and take ownership of the community brand;
- Incorporate the brand into their daily business life;
- Adapt and adopt the brand into their business (i.e. Façade alignment, business signage, themed sale days, etc.);
- Work with their local Chamber of Commerce and Business Improvement Areas to create special events themed around the community brand; and
- Support municipal infrastructure upgrades that align with the community brand.

The Community

- Be proud and take ownership of the community brand;
- Incorporate the brand into their daily quality of life;
- Support the broader community businesses and municipality to showcase the brand; and
- Seize opportunities to promote the brand to friends, family and people from outside the area.



The Municipality

- Be proud and take ownership of their community brand;
- Incorporate the community brand into daily municipal life;
- Promote the community brand in municipal marketing materials; and
- Use beautification and infrastructure projects such as streetscaping, signage, park development, municipal building facades and urban design initiatives to enhance the community's brand.

The County

- Be proud and support the local identities and brands of the communities within the County;
- Promote the individual brands in County marketing materials;
- Use the individual brands and identities to create a unique tourism product offering; and
- Assist municipalities with the delivery of projects to enhance their brand.





The Approach

Organization

The most important pillar as it is the Leaders in the community who can accomplish the goals and objectives set out by the program. It brings partners together and gets everyone working towards the same goal.

↓
Stop

Is Organizational capacity established?

If YES, move onto the 3 pillars.

If NO, complete Organizational capacity before continuing.



Economic Development

Economic Restructuring strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base.



Marketing & Promotion

You need to know who you are before you can know where you're going. Promotion takes many forms, but the goal is to create a positive image that will rekindle community pride and improve consumer and investor confidence in your downtown.



Physical Design

Community Design is about how the physical design of buildings, roads, parks and neighborhoods fit together.

Purpose of a Community Toolkit

This Community Toolkit showcases Port Elgin, its unique identities and opportunities that if applied consistently, will provide the community with a revitalization plan focused on the core of downtown Port Elgin. Having a downtown that is situated directly on a major thoroughway to visiting traffic is an opportunity for the community and downtown to encourage people to stop and stay. Port Elgin can increase its tourism presence and economic role within the County of Bruce by enhancing its unique destination characteristics.

By focusing efforts and being strategic with both public and private undertakings Port Elgin has the potential to create an atmosphere that attracts more visitors, businesses, and creates a vibrant, self-sustaining community for residents. This Toolkit is intended to foster leadership and creativity while at the same time

providing some guidelines in terms of next steps and how to move forward in a consistent and coordinated manner. It provides a summary of the community's identity; an action plan and some tools to help get started. In order to support a coordinated approach, it is recommended that all community partners from business owners and community groups to Town Council and staff embrace this Toolkit and follow this guide as closely as possible, recognizing that it is a living document that will evolve with time.

While sweeping changes are not expected overnight, community-wide participation and implementation through small incremental changes that use the tools outlined in this document will, over time, allow the Vision for downtown Port Elgin to be realized!





The Brand

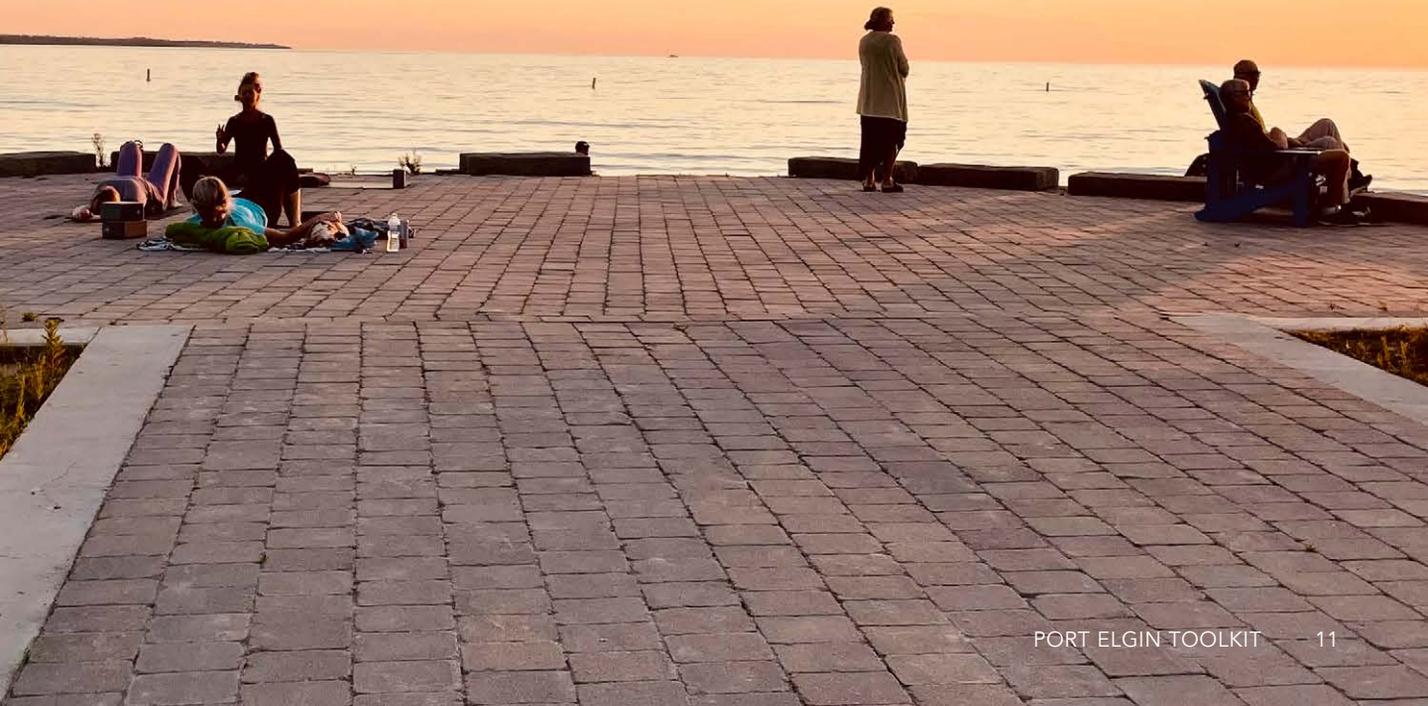
The Boardwalk Vibe

Collect sunsets like you collect vacation memories in Port Elgin: home to a boardwalk vibe like no other. Coast into town and follow the path to the perfect vacation.

Family entertainment begins downtown with sweet treats, casual food and brilliant shops for savouring the moment. Interact with the sun like never before as you stroll from downtown to one of the dozens of sunset vantage points along the shoreline. Après sunset return to downtown to complete your

journey. Whether enjoying a festival, event or the exciting nightlife of Port Elgin these painterly skies and spectacular moments create the perfect backdrop for that family snapshot.

With expansive views of Lake Huron, it's hard to imagine a better location to take in a relaxed atmosphere with your family by your side. Come realize how shimmering views, boardwalk shops and family memories are all within your reach as you enjoy the boardwalk experience by the shore in Port Elgin.



Vision

Downtown Port Elgin is the home to a one-of-a-kind boardwalk vibe. This year-round centre of activity is the heart of the county's shopping and entertainment opportunities, bringing together big-city energy and small-town quality. Vibrant, fun waterfront energy epitomizes Port Elgin, and the friendly hospitality is found from playground to patio—making Port Elgin the place where family memories are created. Nowhere else but in Port Elgin can you experience the boardwalk atmosphere and find it leads to more activities than the day is long.



Mission

A Mission statement takes Port Elgin's Vision and translates it into a stated purpose for the downtown revitalization effort; it can be viewed as the public statement for accomplishing the Vision and the pathway in order to get there.

The mission statement for downtown Port Elgin is:

To develop a diversified and healthy business climate in downtown Port Elgin that will support local needs and act as a shopping and entertainment hub for the broader community incorporating a boardwalk vibe and feeling into both the public and private spaces that shoppers will experience.



What We Heard

In May 2024, key downtown stakeholders, including the Port Elgin Business Improvement Area, Town staff, and the Chamber of Commerce, were asked to participate in a forum to review current community development efforts and action items. Attendees provided feedback using The Characteristics of a Well-Functioning Downtown survey to help inform the Action Plans.

This tool was developed to evaluate the function of downtown. The characteristics of a downtown were divided into five categories: organization, marketing, economic development, product development, and design.

Each characteristic is ranked on a scale of 1 to 5 to yield a final score out of 100, with 1 representing "Does not meet criteria" and 5 indicating it "Very strongly meets criteria".



THE RESULTS

Characteristic	Score (out of 5)
Organization	2.9
Economic Development	3.3
Community Design	3
Product Development	2.9
Marketing & Promotion	2.4
Overall Score	2.9

58%

NOTABLE FEEDBACK

- There is a need for a stronger brand direction in Port Elgin.
- There are minimal opportunities downtown to spend money after 6pm.
- There is an opportunity to encourage visitors and residents to visit downtown year-round.
- Visual identifiers are not in place to strengthen the brand direction.
- Lack of "gateway" when entering downtown.
- Minimal coordinated advertising.



Action Plan Summary

These Action Plans were developed at the grassroots level in downtown Port Elgin with a dedicated group of vested individuals. They represent a summary of the priority actions in order to transform the downtown into a destination and to help guide the revitalization plan forward. Goals transform the Mission statement into priority areas for downtown and assist with moving the Vision forward. The following action charts were established by the stakeholder group as primary areas of focus and are recommended for consideration.

ORGANIZATION

Action Item	Lead	Timeline
Support the creation of a full time BIA coordinator role.	BIA, Town	MT
Leverage use of Coulter Parkette and Police Parkette for community events and experiential attractions.	BIA, Town	MT
Build a contact database of visitors and residents to create communications programs.	Town	MT
Develop a communications plan for toolkit users to encourage use of the updated toolkit and brand guidelines.	Town	MT
Improve visual identifiers to strengthen the Port Elgin brand.	BIA	LT
Develop a community art strategy to encourage more art installations throughout the community and trails.	Town	LT

MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS

Action Item	Lead	Timeline
Enhance promotional partnerships with businesses and community organizations.	BIA, Chamber	ST
Working with downtown businesses, develop a pilot program for “stay open late” to encourage shoulder season spending.	BIA	ST
Support and facilitate Saugeen Shores gift card program.	BIA	ST
Planning of two to four pop-up events, annually.	BIA	ST/MT
Develop a bi-annual direct mail campaign to residents promoting community events and activities.	Town	MT/LT
Identify platform and develop digital itineraries and tours.	BIA, community orgs	LT
Develop programming to nurture and encourage engagement with visitors and residents.	Town	LT
Host a multicultural day event in Saugeen Shores.	Town, Settlement Services	LT

PHYSICAL DESIGN

Action Item	Lead	Timeline
Promote programs that support a more accessible downtown.	Town	ST
Large physical displays for attraction and photo taking.	BIA	MT
Work with Parks to ensure Coulter Parkette is plowed in the winter months.	Town	MT
Review the wayfinding and signage plan to ensure actions were implemented.	Town	MT
Encourage Indigenous art installations.	BIA, Town	MT/LT
Increase the number of bike racks, resting and gathering places (benches), garbage cans, animal waste receptacles.	Town, BIA	LT
Repurpose and redesign Police Parkette.	Town	LT
Consider how the visitor information signage is supporting downtown businesses.	Town	LT
Gateway landmarks / signage to direct residents and visitors to downtown experiences.	BIA	LT
Create a Streetscaping Master Plan; address the need for street furniture.	BIA	LT

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Action Item	Lead	Timeline
Prepare report on pilot location of farmer's market.	BIA, Town	ST
Work with downtown businesses to adopt consistent store hours and days of operation.	BIA	ST
Increase participation in the Spruce the Bruce community development program.	BIA	ST/MT
Develop eligible branding criteria for Spruce the Bruce projects.	Town	MT
Establish biennial data collection to illustrate who visitors and residents are.	Town	LT
Encourage food and retail businesses on main streets.	BIA, Town	LT

Short Term (3-4 months) **Medium Term** (6-12 months) **Long Term** (1 year +)





The Tools

The images and colours shown are for illustration purposes only, and are intended to illustrate a desired style and effect, not to define a specific product or colour palette, and are not intended to serve as working drawings or templates for production.

KEYWORDS

Vibrant Memories

Sunsets

Family-Friendly

Casual

Beach Boardwalk

Materials



Board and Batten



Colourful Fabrics/
Canvas



Yellow Brick



Horizontal Siding



Frosted Glass

Material guidelines help to articulate the design direction outlined by addressing key design considerations for the community and in doing so, promote a higher standard for development that is suited to the distinct identity of Port Elgin. Building materials should be scaled in a way that supports and maintains the historical pattern of building development and be appropriately placed on the building and engage with surroundings when possible. Careful attention to building details such as the placement and proportions of windows, doors and other architectural details can improve the coherence of a building and the street.

Downtown Port Elgin currently features a variety of mixed historical architecture including an abundance of yellow-brick buildings. Materials in local construction should try to reinforce a relaxed family-friendly beach atmosphere and are encouraged to use materials such as:

board and batten, horizontal siding, beach stone, canvas fabrics, natural wood, frosted glass, sand and a variety of layered architectural details such as moldings, pergolas, columns, cornices, shutters and canvas awnings. Buildings should use neutral colours as their base and highlight unique features with splashes of bold colour through the use of landscaping, grass plantings, awnings and signage.

In order for downtown to enhance its destination potential, it needs to move the Vision and Mission forward through a focused channel. The Toolkit has taken previous background research and studies and focused in on elements in an effort to create a cohesive, unique and authentic flavour in the downtown. In order for the Brand to be realized on the ground — a more focused approach to thematic elements and materials has been presented in this Toolkit.

Typography

Arno Pro - Caption

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMm
NnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz
0123456789

The Great Escape - Regular

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMm
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0123456789

Myriad Pro - Bold

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Myriad Pro - Regular

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0123456789

Verdana - Regular

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0123456789

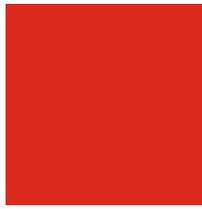


Colour Palette



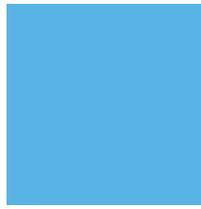
Sunset Orange

CMYK 0/48/95/0
 RGB 248/151/40
 PMS 021 C
 HEX f89829



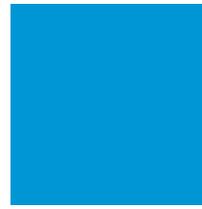
Beachball Red

CMYK 0/100/100/0
 RGB 220/41/30
 PMS 485 C
 HEX dc291e



Fresh Breeze Blue

CMYK 58/13/0/0
 RGB 88/180/229
 PMS 2915 C
 HEX 58b4e5



Wave Blue

CMYK 85/24/0/0
 RGB 0/150/214
 PMS Process Blue C
 HEX 0096d6



Lifeguard White

CMYK 0/0/0/0
 RGB 255/255/255
 HEX ffffff

BUILD A BETTER PALETTE

The colour palette selected is a summary of exterior paint swatches that can be utilized on facades and other application to enhance the Toolkit Brand. The colours shown are drawn from Benjamin Moore colour swatches and are intended for illustration purposes only. This Toolkit does not provide an endorsement of any specific product or paint brand and utilizes these palettes to illustrate a desired style and effect only.



Racing Orange



Semolina



Mayonnaise



Peony



Poolside Blue



Blue Marguerite



Deep Rose



American Cheese



Blue Belle



Yellow Marigold



Cumulus Cotton



Spectra Blue



Patriot Blue



Hibiscus



Cream Yellow

Logo Design

The logo conveys the character of Port Elgin and its connection with the shoreline and spectacular sunsets. The relaxed styled font and flowing graphics are integrated into a contemporary design. Combining the sun, sand, flowing shoreline and fresh air help to reinforce the relaxed beach community atmosphere.



LOGO COLOUR VARIATIONS

The logo conveys the character of Port Elgin and its connection with the shoreline and spectacular sunsets. The relaxed styled font and flowing graphics are integrated into a contemporary design. Combining the sun, sand, flowing shoreline and fresh air help to reinforce the relaxed beach community atmosphere.



A coloured version of the logo should be used when the background of the application is light in colour.



A grayscale version of the logo should be used when the background of the application is light in colour and grayscale has been requested.



A logo version with a white background should be used when the background of the application is any colour other than white.



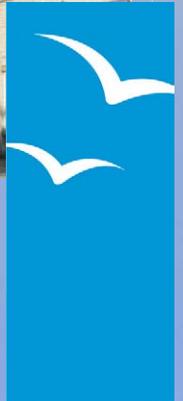
A grayscale version with a white background should be used when the background of the application is any colour other than white and grayscale has been requested.

On the Ground Examples

STREET FURNISHINGS & BANNERS



Planters



Banners



Photo courtesy of Bruce County

SEATING & WASTE RECEPTACLES



Chairs



Waste Receptacles



SIGNAGE & BIKE RACKS



Bike Rack



Signage Headers

PUBLIC ART

Public art is an opportunity for the community of Port Elgin to create public spaces and displays that reflect the local talents and the community Brand.



Bournemouth Beach, UK



Queensland, Australia



Melbourne, Australia



Oversized Beachball, Pier Park



Boardwalk Design



Water Feature, Darling Harbour

LIGHTING



Light Wall



Street Lights



FACADE EXAMPLES



Boardwalk Bakery, Florida



Chicago Navy Pier



Disney Boardwalk, Florida



Ron Jon Surf Shop, Pier Park USA



Pier Park, USA



Atlantic City, New Jersey

LOCAL FACADES



Before

After



Before

After



Before

After



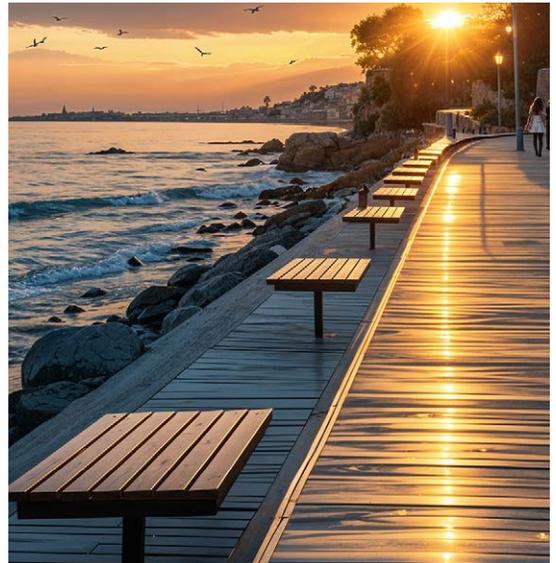
OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE



Park Signage



Splash Pad



Boardwalk Benches

Summary

The Town of Saugeen Shores, in collaboration with community stakeholders, has developed a toolkit that creates the basis for a successful downtown revitalization program. Ownership is the key to developing an authentic and believable Brand for a community. All members of the community have a role to play in fostering the Brand and in moving the Action Plan forward. The methods employed to create this Toolkit (combined with positive community feedback) ensures that this Toolkit is destined for success when applied consistently. Too many times downtown redevelopments buy the same historic coach lamp as the community next door, which dilutes the authenticity of the place. Be known for something different and make your community stand apart from the crowd!

In closing, we offer the following inspiration:

1. Creating successful downtowns is about more than planning. Many great plans get bogged down because they are too big, too expensive and simply take too long to happen. **Short-term actions** like planting flowers can be a way of not only testing ideas, but also giving people the confidence that change is occurring and that their ideas matter. Short-term actions need to occur at the outset and then be evaluated while longer-term planning is in progress.

2. **Money is not the issue.** All too often money is used as an excuse for doing nothing, which is why you hear people say "it can't be done!" In fact, too much money or money spent on consultants actually discourages the inventiveness

and creativity required to create a great street or downtown. When money becomes an issue, it is generally an indication that the wrong concept is at work. So don't worry about the money, just get started!

3. **You are never finished.** Creating a great place is not about developing a plan or a design. It is based on community passion, vision and an evolving Action Plan. Part of any plan has to be the management of the downtown. No matter how good the buildings look or how many hanging baskets are hung, the downtown will never be successful unless it is well managed by community stakeholders.



This Toolkit is a starting point and illustrates possibilities. For more information or support with your local project, please contact the Town's Community Development team at: visit@saugeenshores.ca

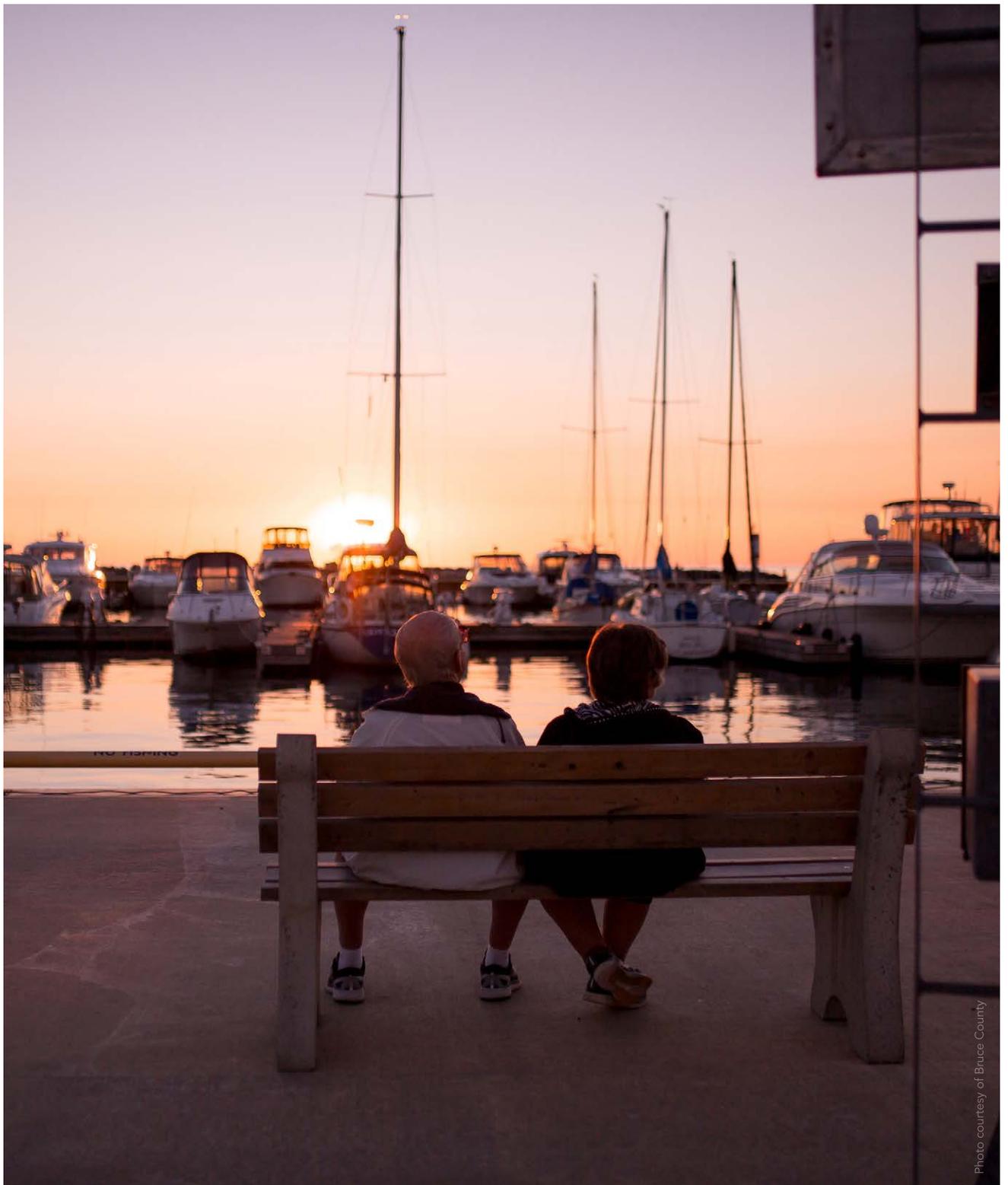


Photo courtesy of Bruce County



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