

**Halifax Regional Council
February 19, 2008**

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY:



Dan English, Chief Administrative Officer



Wayne Anstey, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer - Operations

DATE: February 5, 2008

SUBJECT: **Project 01122 - Land Use Planning Study, Western Shore Bedford Basin: Consultant's Report**

ORIGIN

1. Halifax Harbour Plan Initiative
2. RFP # 06-035: Land Use Planning Study, Western Shore Bedford Basin; Contract awarded April 2006

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

1. Regional Council approve-in-principle the findings and recommendations of the "Land Use Planning Study, Western Shore Bedford Basin", dated January 2008, and request staff to:
 - (a) Commence the process to amend the Bedford Highway Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law, using the report's recommendations as a framework;
 - (b) Use the report's recommendations as a basis for implementing infrastructure improvements along the Bedford Highway corridor and Active Transportation (Trail) development; and
 - (c) Prepare terms of reference for a Streetscape Study for the Rockingham commercial corridor, to include detailed urban design guidelines for the Bedford Highway/Kearney Lake Road intersection area.

BACKGROUND

As a component of HRM's ongoing Harbour Planning Initiative, it was felt that the western shore the Bedford Basin warranted a specific land use planning study to help in determining appropriate policy direction. The core Study Area generally comprises all lands below (east of) the Bedford Highway, including all appurtenant waterlots, from Hogan Point (south of Birch Cove) in the south to the Traveller's Motel/Bedford Waterfront Phase II area in the north. Lands immediately west of the Bedford Highway are also included, but primarily for the purposes of land use planning context (area of influence/impact).

The predominant use of lands within the study area is the rail corridor which provides both freight and passenger service to and from peninsula Halifax. Other uses include a mix of highway commercial development, residential development and the historic Prince's Lodge Rotunda property. There are significant areas of vacant land, and many sites are steeply sloped, making transportation access (both vehicular and active) difficult. Infilling of waterlots, apart from that associated with the construction of the rail line, the China Town site and the Bedford Waterfront Phase II lands, has not been extensive.

The overall objective of the study was to analyze and make recommendations concerning future land use for the area.

The study was awarded to O'Halloran Campbell Consultants Limited, in association with Ekistics Planning and Design, Harrison and Associates, and Jacques Whitford Environmental Limited. The project Steering Committee comprised representatives from Regional/Community Planning, Development Services, Infrastructure and Asset Management and Transportation and Public Works.

DISCUSSION

An Executive Summary of the 'Land Use Planning Study, Western Shore Bedford Basin' is included as Attachment A of this report. Copies of the full report can be made available to Councillors upon request. The document will be posted on the HRM website following Council's deliberation on this item.

As a brief summary, the study process entailed a thorough investigation and analysis of all relevant matters pertaining to existing and future development opportunities for the area. It included the following:

- Review of background data and reports
- Existing land use and water use
- Existing municipal infrastructure
- Biophysical assessment
- Public consultation
- Identification of opportunities and constraints
- Identification of important public views to the Basin

- Alternative concepts development
- Proposed Land Use Plan and Recommendations

In terms of public and stakeholder input into this study, the consulting team conducted a series of Strategic Interviews with community groups, individuals and property owners, held a Design Forum and hosted two Open Houses/ Public Meetings.

A summary of the main findings and recommendations of the study is as follows:

- Multi-Use Trail to be constructed along the shoreline of Bedford Basin for the entire length of the study area, with vehicular and pedestrian linkages to the Bedford Highway at defined points.
- Enable more intensive high quality mixed use development on the Bedford Waterfront Phase II lands (consistent with the recent Community Vision) and at the Birch Cove area (greater China Town area) as “development bookends” to the Bedford Highway corridor.
- Undertake comprehensive planning and detailed urban design guidelines for the Bedford Highway/Kearney Lake Road intersection area
- Enhance the existing nodes of commercial development at the Bedford Hwy./Larry Uteck Blvd. intersection area and Clearwater/DownEast Mobility area with mixed use commercial/residential development.
- ‘Pedestrianize’ Bedford Highway, with sidewalks, curb/gutter and appropriate landscaping/furniture.
- Preserve views to the Basin, where possible, from the Bedford Highway and other key public vantage points.
- Seek to reserve a waterfront site as long term potential for a wastewater treatment plant.

Staff is suggesting that Council approve-in-principle the findings and recommendations of the consultant’s report. The recommendations will be used as follows:

- (a) For land use related matters, the recommendations will be used as a framework for the preparation of amendments to the Bedford Highway Secondary Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law. This process will include additional public consultation and a Public Hearing before Regional Council.

Matters to be addressed (but not necessarily limited to) in the MPS/LUB amendment process include:

- (i) Policies regarding the infilling and use of water lots;
- (ii) Policies regarding implementation of the multi-use trail and associated facilities;

- (iii) Policies establishing land uses and/or locations that will be subject to development agreements, including evaluative criteria;
 - (iv) Review of the permitted uses and provisions of the C-2B zone;
 - (iv) Policies establishing the intent to undertake detailed planning (urban design) for the Bedford Highway/Kearney Lake Road intersection area, plus consideration of interim development controls;
 - (v) Policies regarding the need to address traffic generation and sanitary sewer capacity for future development proposals;
 - (vi) Policies regarding the preservation of views of Bedford Basin from public vantage points;
 - (vii) Policies regarding the presence of the DND calibration facility
 - (viii) Policies regarding the reservation of a site(s) for a future wastewater treatment plant;
 - (ix) Other land use related items that may arise during the public/stakeholder consultation process
- (b) For infrastructure related matters such as Bedford Highway streetscape improvements and the multi-use trail, the recommendations will be used as a basis for capital budget planning;
- (c) An additional study is recommended to address two areas: (i) a streetscape study for the Rockingham commercial corridor to include opportunities for the southward extension of the multi-use trail; and (ii) a comprehensive plan and urban design guidelines for the Bedford Highway/Kearney Lake Road intersection area, including the China Town site and other adjacent lands of United Gulf, Irving Oil lands, Wedgewood Motel property and the St. Peter's Anglican Church property. Staff will proceed to prepare Terms of Reference for this study and issue an RFP, with funding coming from the Regional Plan Capital Budget. Award of this study will require approval of either Regional Council or the CAO.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate budget implications associated with recommendations (a) and (b) of this report. The potential implementation of capital works stemming from these recommendations, for example, the multi-use trail, will be subject to further reports to Council either by separate cover or as advanced through Council's budget and business planning process.

Funding for recommendation (c) [Streetscape Study for Rockingham Commercial Corridor and detailed urban design guidelines for the Bedford Highway/Kearney Lake Road Intersection Area], estimated at approximately \$75,000 is available in the approved 2007/2008 capital Account CDV00738, Centre Plans Design. Funds are required for community design expertise. Financial Services at this time, confirms budget availability (cumulative unspent budget) of \$500,000 in this account. The balance of funds are needed for community design expertise and infrastructure design expertise in visioning communities.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating,

Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Council may choose to approve-in-principal the findings and recommendations of the 'Land Use Planning Study, Western Shore Bedford Basin'. This is staff's recommendation.
2. Council may choose to request staff to modify the recommendations of the consultant's report.

ATTACHMENTS

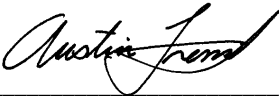
Attachment A: Executive Summary: Land Use Planning Study, Western Shore Bedford Basin

- Study Area, Location Map (Map 1)
- Proposed Land Use Plan (Figure 6.1)
- Sketch Drawings - Multi-Use Trail and Prince's Lodge Overpass

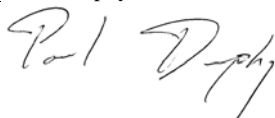
A copy of this report can be obtained online at <http://www.halifax.ca/council/agendasc/cagenda.html> then choose the appropriate meeting date, or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

Report Prepared by: Roger Wells, Supervisor, Regional/Community Planning, 490-4373

Report Approved by: _____
Austin French, Manager, Planning Services, 490-6717

Financial Approval by: 
Catherine Sanderson, Senior Manager, Financial Services, 490-1562

Report Approved by: _____
Paul Dunphy, Director, Community Development



Attachment A

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Land Use Planning Study, Western Shore Bedford Basin

This land use planning study, which covers the Western Shore of Bedford Basin from Hogans Point to WDCL's Bedford Waterfront Phase II, has identified, through the public participation process, the importance of this area to the community and region as a whole. The Western Shore of Bedford Basin represents a key visual opportunity not experienced elsewhere around the Bedford Basin. A primary objective is to retain the existing "scenic drive". This unique opportunity coupled with major residential growth west of the Bedford Highway and the resulting demand and need for an active transportation trail add to the desire to plan for development in the area. Another focus should be on changing how the Bedford Highway R.O.W. is used and to "pedestrianize" it with a full streetscape which can then be enjoyed by the growing number of residents and it can facilitate the link to the active transportation trail.

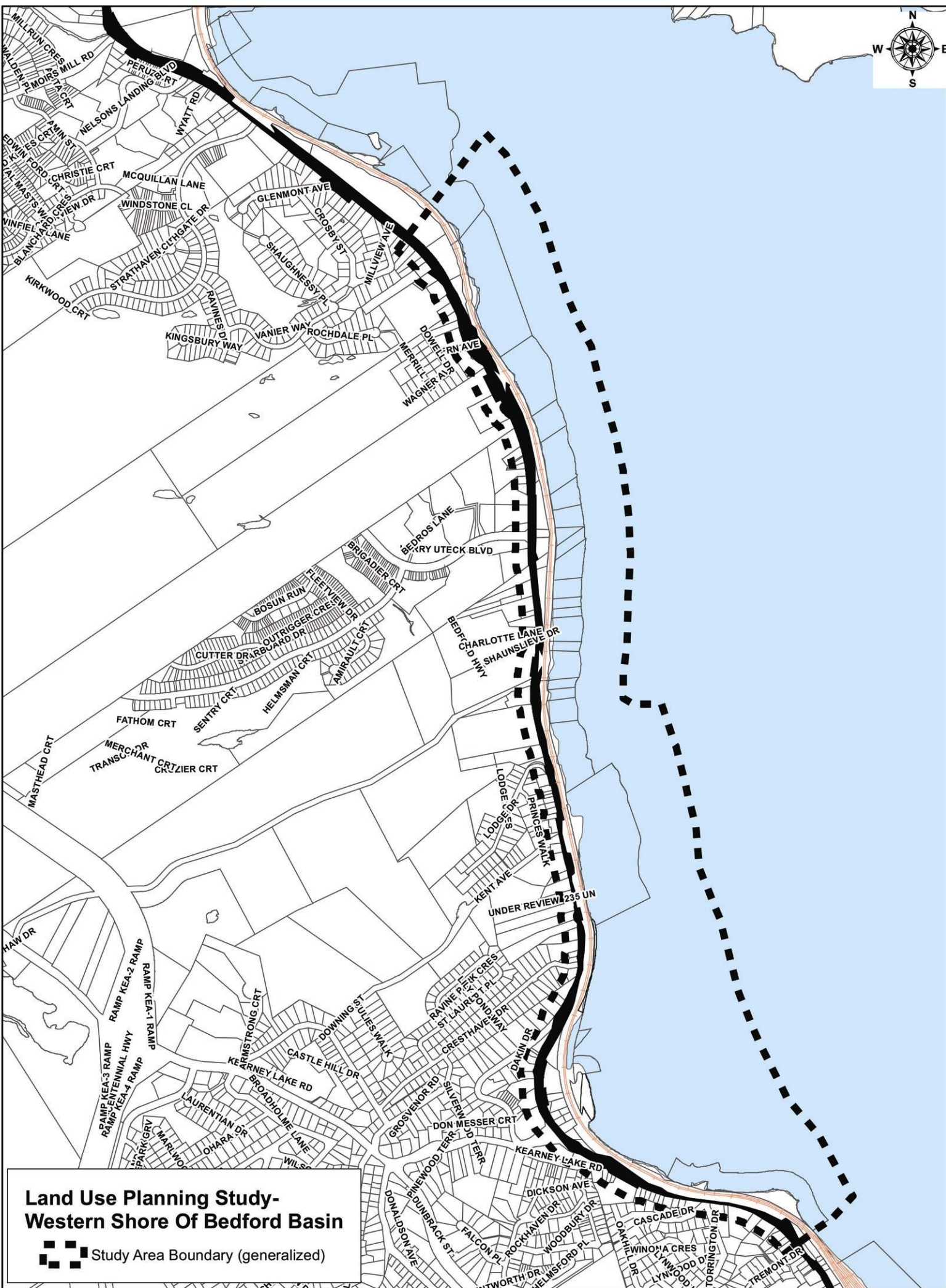
The study has shown that:

- The shoreline for the most part should be preserved for public use.
- Views from Bedford Highway should be preserved for the most part.
- A multi-use/active transportation trail should be provided through the study area along the shoreline from Hogan's Point to Bedford Waterfront Phase II.
- Park like amenities should be provided at selected locations along the trail with primary focus on parks at Prince's Lodge and Hogan's Point.
- Public access must be provided or assured to the waterfront and to any harbourfront active transportation trail.
- Parking facilities should be provided for active transportation trail users and these for the most part will have to be acquired by HRM.
- The active transportation trail must be designed with appropriate safety considerations:
 - separation from rail with see-through chain link fence
 - appropriate lighting and landscaping
 - emergency vehicle access

- CPTED principles must be followed in the design and construction of the trail.
- Higher density multi-use development should be restricted to the Birch Cove area to the south (China Town) and Bedford Waterfront Phase II to the north (Bookend concept).
- There should be no infilling of water lots between the bookends, in the short term, except for public purposes and water dependent uses.
- Development may take place on the Bedford Highway corridor on the basis that:
 - there is no development intensification in the study area (i.e. along the Bedford Highway) until the proposed Larry Uteck Blvd/Highway 102 Interchange is completed and connected to Larry Uteck Boulevard or until Regional Council amends Policy MS-7 of the Bedford South and Wentworth Secondary Planning Strategies.
 - there is no development intensification until the results of the Bedford Highway sewer capacity study is completed and appropriate infrastructure is in place, or unless otherwise approved by independent study.
 - building heights are restricted to 35 ft except as otherwise agreed by HRM and reflected in an appropriate Development Agreement.
 - historically and archaeologically important sites should be protected
 - natural resources and the environment must be protected
 - an archaeological site assessment should be conducted prior to any site disturbance/construction east of the Bedford Highway.
- The Kearney Lake Road Intersection with Bedford Highway should be comprehensively planned. This would include properties such as Wedgewood Motel, St. Peter's Church, China Town, the intersection area, Irving and Farmer Clems.
- The residential/small town atmosphere should be preserved along the majority of the Bedford Highway corridor.
- The Bedford Highway, through the study area, should be pedestrianized with the addition of curb and gutter, sidewalks and grass verges with appropriate landscaping/streetscaping on both sides of the sidewalk. An alternative to sidewalks on both sides would be a sidewalk on the west side and 4 m wide AT Trail on the

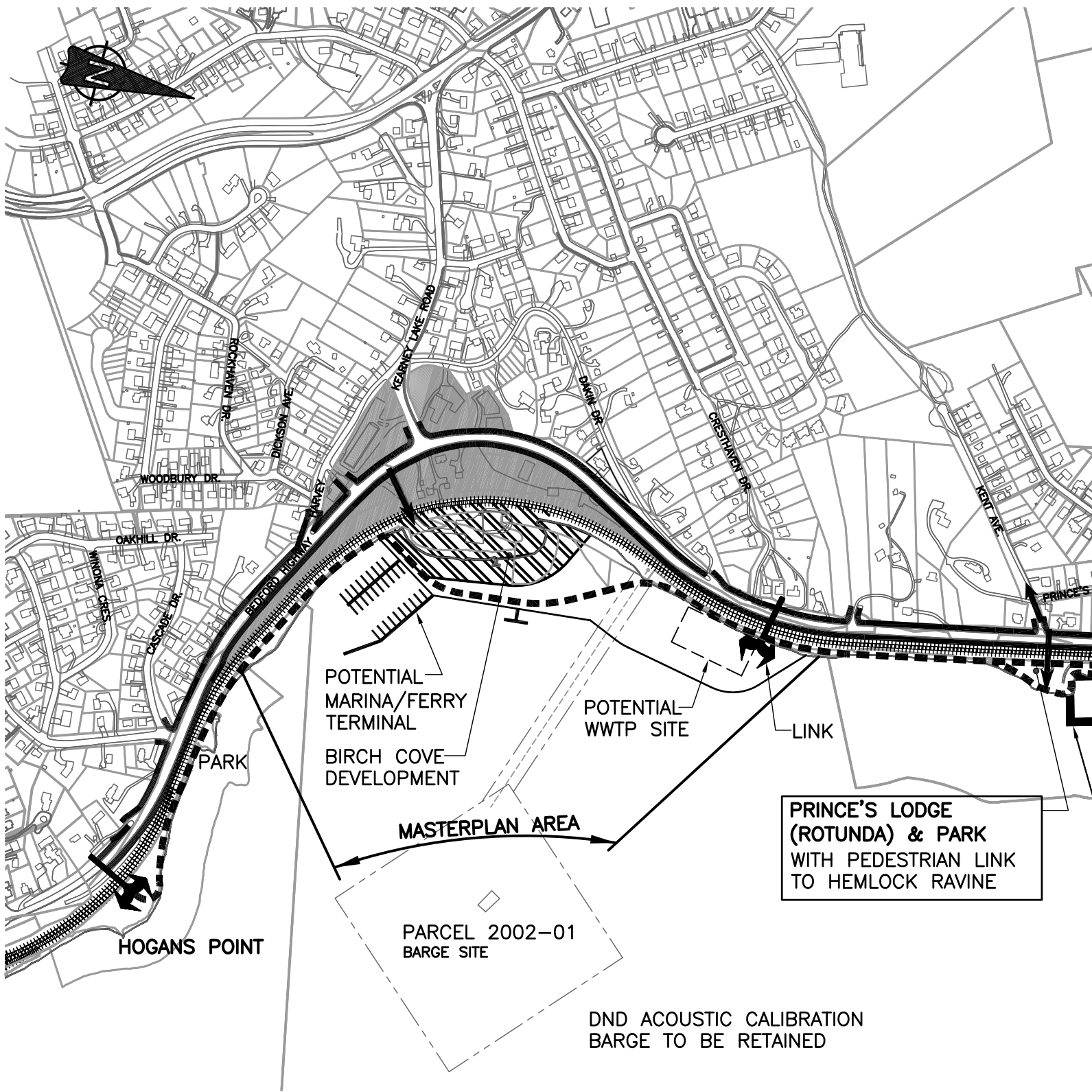
east side of the highway.

- Selected nodes of mixed-use development have been identified at the Kearney Lake Road Intersection area, the area surrounding the Larry Uteck Blvd. intersection and the area around Clearwater/Down East Mobility.
- A site for a possible future Wastewater Treatment Plant has been identified along the shoreline of Bedford Basin between China Town and the Rotunda on the basis that the roof of the WWTF will be “green” and will create a public amenity.
- In the longer term this land use plan could be revisited to consider controlled development along the shoreline of the Bedford Basin (including water lots) as a logical extension of the Bedford Waterfront Phase II development.






□ □ □





Study Area Boundary (generalized)



LEGEND

PROPOSED LAND USE

-  COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
-  MIXED USE COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL
-  HIGHER DENSITY POTENTIAL

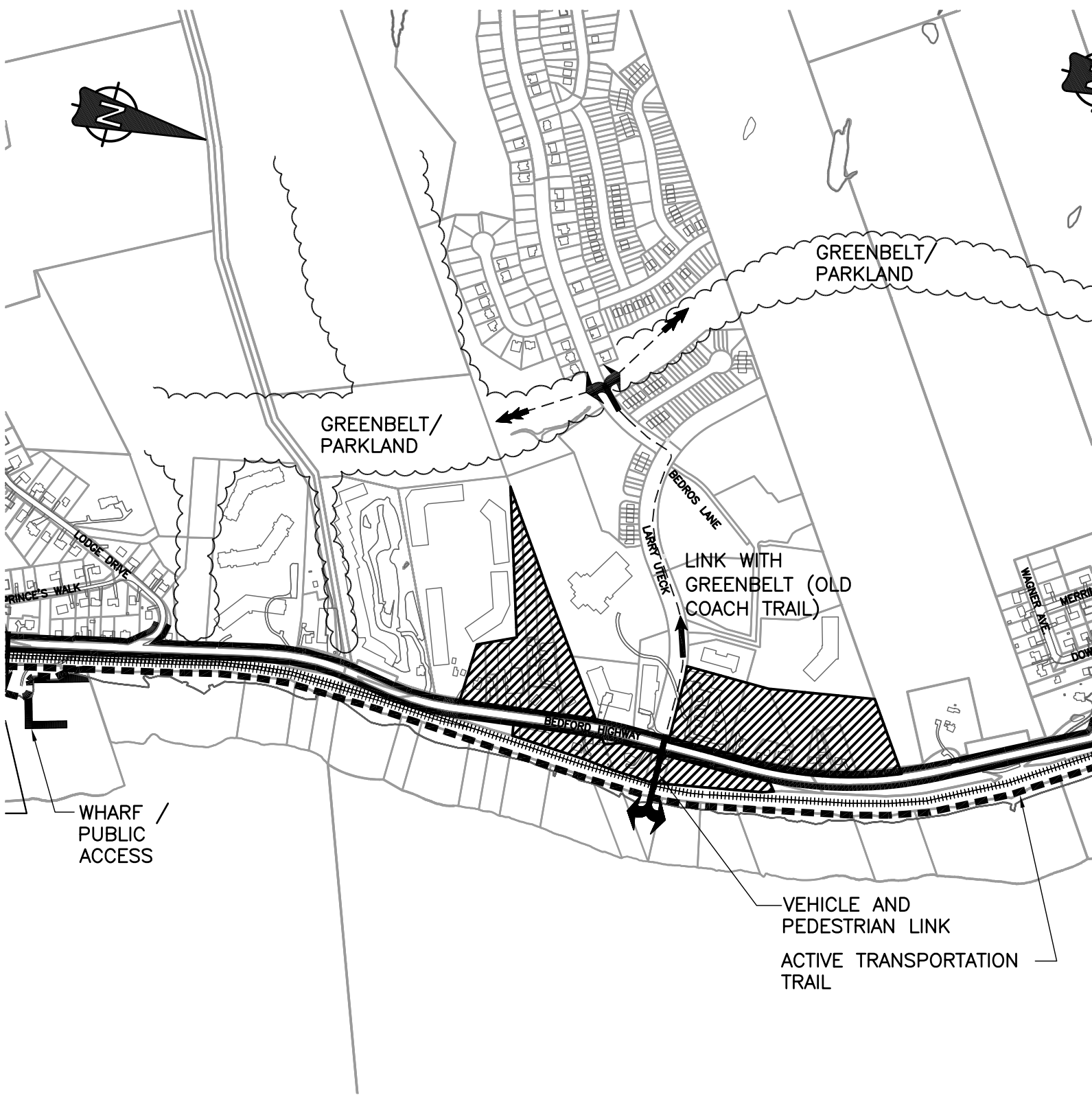
-  MULTI-USE TRAIL
-  PROPOSED SIDEWALK - BOTH SIDES
-  RAILWAY TRACKS
-  PEDESTRIAN / VEHICULAR ACCESS

NEXT →

PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN FIGURE 6.1 - 1 OF 3



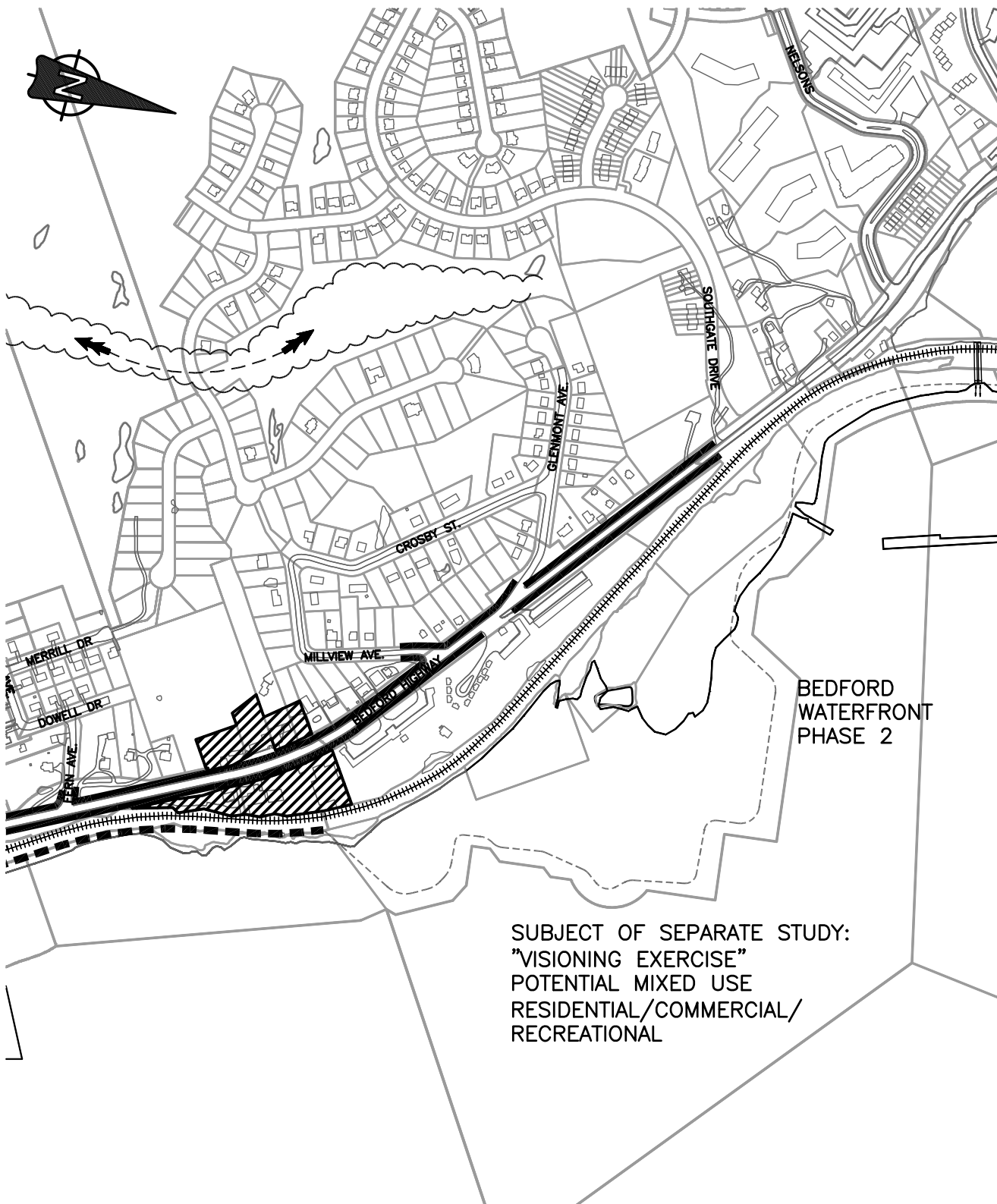
O'HALLORAN CAMPBELL
consultants limited



PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN
FIGURE 6.1 - 2 OF 3



O'HALLORAN CAMPBELL
 consultants limited



SCALE 1:7500

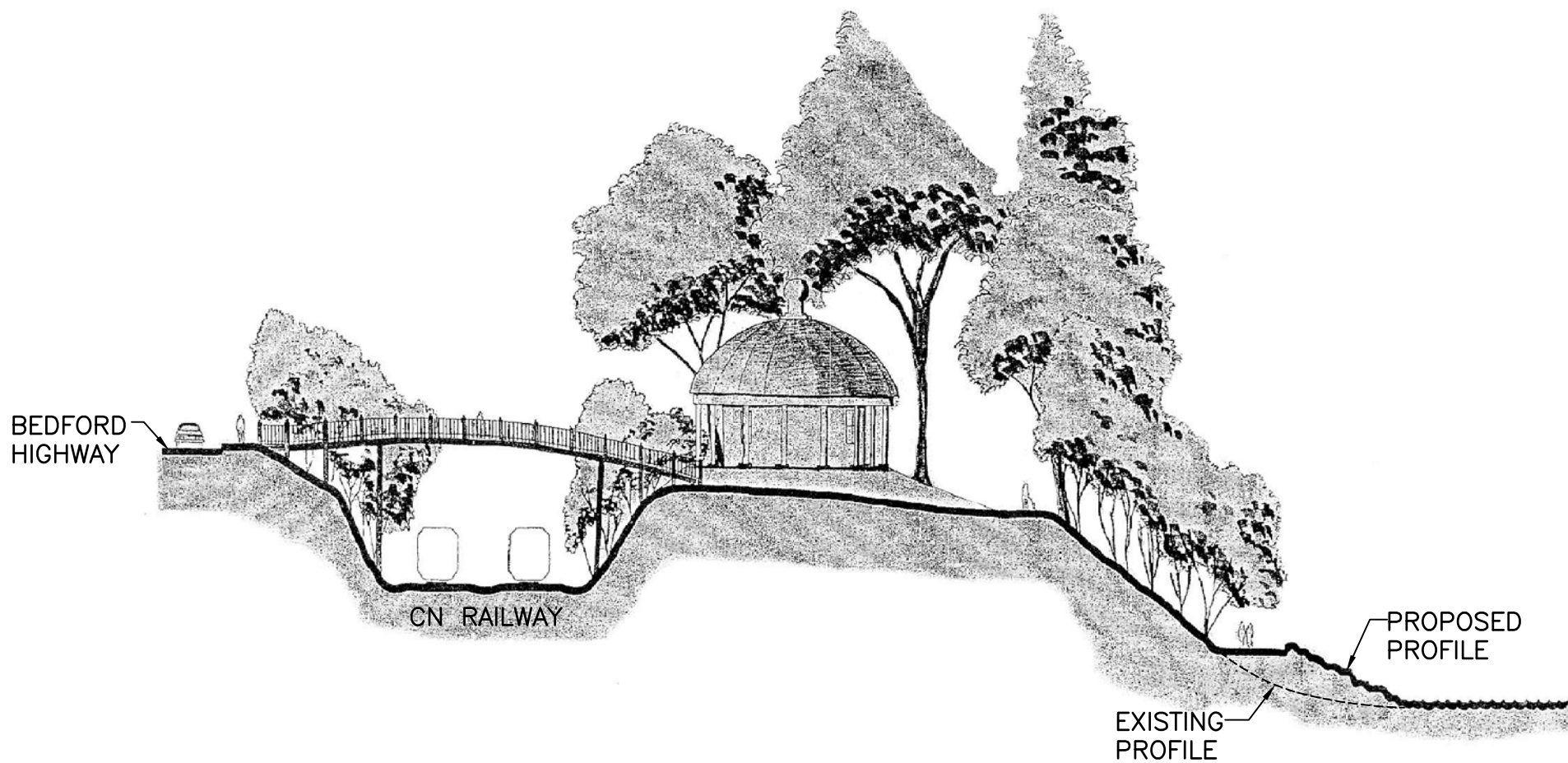
← PREVIOUS

PROPOSED LAND USE PLAN FIGURE 6.1 - 3 OF 3



O'HALLORAN CAMPBELL
consultants limited





ROTUNDA SECTION
N.T.S.