



Bala Heritage Conservation District Study

June 2014
PROJECT #: 12174BE



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Bala Heritage Conservation District Study was initiated by the Township of Muskoka Lakes (one of six lower tier municipalities in the upper tier municipality of the District of Muskoka Lakes) who issued a Request for Proposal to engage a consultant to prepare a Heritage Conservation District Study for Bala, in accordance with the requirements of the Ontario Heritage Act.

The Township of Muskoka Lakes retained MHBC in August, 2013 to undertake a Heritage Conservation District Study for an area located within the community of Bala. Specifically, MHBC was retained to undertake the following tasks:

- Attend project start-up, and attend project initiation meeting with Director of Planning and Steering Committee.
- Complete historical and documentary research of the study area, identify approved or pending plans that would affect study area.
- Identify and inventory all built features, structures and cultural heritage landscapes within the study area.
- Evaluate the integrity of the study area resources.
- Prepare documentation of heritage resources within study area, including information sheets, complete with photographs of property.

The study area examined for this Heritage Conservation District study consists of primarily publicly owned land, including lands owned by the Township and the District of Muskoka; Crown properties as well as lands owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway and one private property. The key descriptors for the proposed boundary of the study area are as follows:

- The eastern boundary is the eastern side of Bala Falls Road from the southern intersection with the District Highway to the south-east corner of South Bala Falls Bridge, and then the northward view line towards the north-east corner of the Steamship Wharf Bridge (aka Access Bridge).
- The northern boundary is from the north-east corner of the Steamship Wharf Bridge to the north-west corner of Mill Stream Bridge.

- The western boundary is on the west side of the District Highway from the north-west corner to the south-west corner of the Mill Stream Bridge, east to the south-west corner of the CP railway bridge, south along the western side of the CP railway line to the north-east corner of the Township parking lot, west to the western side of the District Highway, south to the north-east corner of Margaret Burgess Park, westward along the northern side of Margaret Burgess Park to the Moon River, and then the southward view line towards the southern intersection of the District Highway and Bala Falls Road.

The study area contains the north and south falls, all of Portage Island, and part of Burgess Island which also includes Margaret Burgess Park.

A Preliminary Findings Report was prepared in December 2013, which provided historical and documentary research of the study area. In February 2014, after review of the Preliminary Findings Report, the Township authorized MHBC to continue with the preparation of the Heritage Conservation District Study. This report represents the Heritage Conservation District Study. The conclusion is that the study area proposed by the Municipality has merit as a Heritage Conservation District.

It is important to note that the Heritage Conservation District Study does not contain any guidelines, policies or restrictions for property owners. These matters would be reflected in a Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines. A Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines would be the next step.

1.2 Provisions of the *Ontario Heritage Act* and provincial guidance

The *Ontario Heritage Act* is the key provincial legislation that enables municipalities to conserve, protect and manage heritage properties and areas. There are two parts to the Act that concern cultural heritage:

- Part IV enables a municipality to designate individual properties that are of cultural heritage value or interest and Part V enables a municipality to designate groups or areas of properties that demonstrate cultural heritage value. The Township of Muskoka Lakes has designated four (4) properties under Part IV within the current study area (Burgess Memorial Church, Township Dock on Lake Muskoka, Portage Landing on Moon River and the Shield Park and Parking Lot). Currently there are no Heritage Conservation Districts designated under Part V in the municipality.
- Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* enables a municipality to designate by by-law all or any part of a municipality as a Heritage Conservation District. Prior to designating a district it has become conventional practice to study an area in order to identify the cultural

heritage values and character of a prospective district. Sometimes this is formally undertaken by defining an area by by-law.

Guidance on what constitutes a Heritage Conservation District is provided by a number of sources. The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport in its published guidelines (*Heritage Conservation Districts, A Guide to District Designation under the Ontario Heritage Act*) note that a Heritage Conservation District:

"...may comprise an area with a group or complex of buildings, or a larger area with many buildings and properties. It may also comprise an entire municipality with a concentration of heritage resources with special character or historical association that distinguishes it from its surroundings."

Designating a Heritage Conservation District involves identifying groups of heritage properties that together with other distinguishing features or attributes form a distinctive place worthy of informed protection and management. The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport has also noted in its published guidelines "Heritage Conservation Districts: A Guide to District Designation under the *Ontario Heritage Act*" that a Heritage Conservation District typically displays a number of characteristics including:

- *"A concentration of heritage buildings, sites, structures; designed landscapes, natural landscapes that are linked by aesthetic, historical and socio-cultural contexts or use.*
- *A framework of structured elements including major natural features such as topography, land form, landscapes, water courses and built form such as pathways and street patterns, landmarks, nodes or intersections, approaches and edges.*
- *A sense of visual coherence through the use of such elements as building scale, mass, height, material, proportion, colour, etc. that convey a distinct sense of time or place.*
- *A distinctiveness which enables districts to be recognised and distinguishable from their surroundings or from neighbouring areas."*

The Township of Muskoka Lake's current Official Plan contains the following guidance with regards to Heritage Conservation Districts in Urban Centres (of which Bala is included):

4.4.2 Council may consider the designation of a Heritage Conservation District. Prior to the designation of a Heritage Conservation District or Districts, Council shall:

- i) pass a by-law defining an area or areas to be examined for future designation as a Heritage Conservation District(s).*
- ii) prepare a study for the area or areas to determine the feasibility of designation, the delineation of the Heritage District boundaries and an evaluation of the area's historic character.*
- ii) the study will be prepared in accordance with Ontario's Heritage Conservation District Guidelines prepared by the Ministry of Culture.*
- iv) public participation will be encouraged in the preparation of the study.*
- v) Heritage District Planning Guidelines may be prepared after the approval of the designation of the Heritage Conservation District by the Ontario Municipal Board. The guidelines can include policies to guide Council in the approval of permit applications for new development and alterations to properties located within the Heritage Conservation District.*

Sections 5.3.7 (related to Waterfront) of the Township of Muskoka Lakes Official Plan provides the same considerations for Heritage Conservation Districts.

The specific purpose of the Heritage Conservation District study assessment is discussed further in Section 1.3.

1.3 Purpose of the Heritage Conservation District Study

This Study is the first part of a two-part process that may culminate in a Heritage Conservation District in Bala. This first phase includes the heritage assessment component that describes and evaluates the cultural heritage value of the Bala study area. This includes approximately 34 different features or properties, such as two buildings, 10 bridges or overpass/underpass structures, highways and roadways, pathways, a cenotaph, waterfront areas, water features (including two waterfalls), two dams, public park areas, and parking lots, as well as topography, vegetation and views. During the Study Phase, it is the intent to assess the identified study area and its features order to determine whether a concentration of heritage resources are present, and then to establish a boundary that contains a majority of heritage resources, without regard to property ownership. A map of the study area is shown on Figure 1 and a listing of study area features is shown on Figure 2.


If, as a result of the Heritage Conservation District Study report, it is determined that it is feasible to proceed with potential designation, the second phase of the work would begin. The second phase of the process would create a Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines that would provide the basis for management and protection of the area's heritage character, including built features and landscapes.



Source: Aerial - First Base Solutions, 2008

Figure 1
Bala Heritage Conservation District Study Area

LEGEND

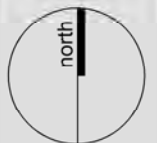
 Study Area

DATE: April 2014

SCALE: 1:4,000

FILE: 12174BE

DRN: CAC



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Bala, Ontario
 Township of Muskoka Lakes


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 URBAN DESIGN
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 ARCHITECTURE
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Source: Aerial - First Base Solutions, 2008

Figure 2
Bala Heritage Conservation District - Resources

LEGEND

 Study Area

Resources

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Lake Muskoka | 18. Canadian Pacific Railway |
| 2. Moon River | 19. Diver's Point/Legris Park |
| 3. North Bala Falls/North Channel | 20. CPR Bridge over South Falls |
| 4. South Bala Falls/South Channel | 21. Bala Falls Road bridge over South Falls |
| 5. Mill Stream | 22. South dam |
| 6. Burgess Island | 23. CPR Bridge over Lake Muskoka |
| 7. Portage Island | 24. Muskoka Road 169 Bridge over North Falls |
| 8. Steamboat Wharf | 25. North dam |
| 9. Former location of the Summer Station | 26. Muskoka Road 169 Bridge over Mill Stream |
| 10. Margaret Burgess Park | 27. CPR Bridge over Mill Stream |
| 11. Purks Place | 28. Steamship wharf bridge |
| 12. Burgess Memorial Church | 29. Bala Falls Road underpass |
| 13. Cenotaph | 30. Muskoka Road 169 Bridge over South Falls |
| 14. Shield Parking Lot | 31. Muskoka Road 169 underpass |
| 15. Heritage Maple Tree | 32. White Pine grove |
| 16. Portage landing at Moon River | 33. Muskoka Road 169 |
| 17. Portage landing at Lake Muskoka | 34. Bala Falls Road |

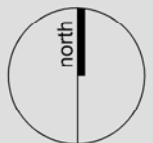
Bala, Ontario
 Township of Muskoka Lakes

DATE: April 2014

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The terms of reference provided by the municipality and the requirements of the *Ontario Heritage Act* guided the scope of this Heritage Conservation District Study. The *Ontario Heritage Act* section guiding the approach required that a study shall:

- a) *examine the character and appearance of the area that is the subject of the study, including buildings, structures and other property features of the area, to determine if the area should be preserved as a Heritage Conservation District;*
- b) *examine and make recommendations as to the geographic boundaries of the area to be designated;*
- c) *consider and make recommendations as to the objectives of the designation and the content of the Heritage Conservation District plan required under section 41.1;*
- d) *make recommendations as to any changes that will be required to the municipality's official plan and to any municipal by-laws, including any zoning by-laws.*

Accordingly, the heritage study report specifically examines the following aspects of the prospective district:

- Historical growth and development of Bala (Section 2),
- The character of the study area and its integrity (Sections 3 and 4),
- Land use character (Section 5),
- Geographic boundaries of the area to be potentially designated (Section 6),
- Objectives of the designation and the content of the Heritage Conservation District plan (Section 7), and;
- Potential changes that will be required to the Township of Muskoka Lake's Official Plan and to any municipal by-laws (Section 8).

2.0 Character and appearance of the study area

2.1 Introduction

This section of the Bala Heritage Conservation District Study examines the character and appearance of the study area as required under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The various report sections that follow contain summaries and conclusions from survey work and research analysis, including the heritage resource inventory (See Appendix A). Together the findings and conclusions of this section provide the rationale for the boundary delineation that is found in Section 6. Historical background research was conducted to gain an understanding of the study area and its place within the development of the municipality and wider area. Historical research identifies the themes, forces and events that shaped the history of Bala and helps to understand the land patterns, appearance and character of the study area.

The research has focused on four main components: historical settlement and context; study area resources and character; integrity and policy review. The information was compiled through a combination of site visits, research, and consultation with members of the Heritage Committee. Information provided by the Heritage Committee was reviewed, as well as various historic maps, photos, local histories and existing reports. Various Regional and Municipal policies were consulted when completing the policy review exercise. The project team members conducted a site visit to examine the study area and its resources.

2.2 Historical settlement and context

The following sections contain a summary of the background history of Bala, and in particular, the study area proposed for a Heritage Conservation District. This background history is not intended to be an exhaustive history of day-to-day life in the community, but rather provides the historical context and the summary of human activity that has shaped the evolution of the study area to present day.

2.2.1 Location and study area

The study area selected by the Township of Muskoka Lakes for a Heritage Conservation District Study is located in Bala, Ontario. The study area comprises municipal (Township and District) lands located in the core of the community, crown lands, Canadian Pacific Rail Lands, and private property (see map following this page).

The study area is located between Lake Muskoka and the Moon River. The study area contains two islands, Burgess Island and Portage Island, located between the two water features.

2.2.2 Physiographic context

Bala is located within the physiographic region known as the Georgian Bay Fringe (Chapman and Putnam 214, 1984). This region characterizes a broad band of rocky knobs and ridges around Georgian Bay, with shallow soil. It generally covers the Parry Sound and Muskoka areas, extending eastward in patches towards the Kawartha Lakes. The area's vegetation generally consists of red oak, white pine, jack pine, hemlock and other soft and hardwood species, generally suited to the rocky and shallow soil conditions (Chapman and Putnam 214, 1984).

An Archaeological and Historic Sites Board of Canada plaque is located in the parking lot off Highway 169, in Bala, and describes the rock formation visible from the parking lot, and pervasive in the surrounding landscape, covering two thirds of the surface area of Ontario. The rock formation is part of the Precambrian Shield, which is one of the oldest rock formations of the earth's crust, formed between one and two billion years ago. The hard rocky surface and shallow soils of the shield prevented substantial agricultural development, but contains valuable mineral resources, and supports the growth of tree species suitable for timber and pulp industries. The last glacial period resulted in ice sheets covering the shield and creating thousands of lakes evident in the land today. Since the late 19th century, these lakes, rocky scenery and forest land have been an attractive setting for thousands of cottagers and tourists, and this seasonal population and related industry has become a defining characteristic of the area.

The town of Bala is located between the Moon River and Lake Muskoka. The Moon River sub watershed flows from Lake Muskoka, westerly through Moon River and Musquash River. Less than 5% of the 71,434 hectare sub watershed is developed, with 96% of the area in natural cover and 49% of the area consisting of Crown lands and protected as Crown Nature Reserves. The Moon River is a branch of the sub watershed approximately 35 km in length, flowing from Bala Bay on Lake Muskoka and emptying into Georgian Bay. There is one dam on Moon River that does not generate power.

Lake Muskoka is located in the Township of Muskoka Lakes and has an approximate surface area of 12,100 hectares and mean depth of 18 meters. Bala Bay, the part of the lake located at the study area, has a surface area of 4.25 kilometres squared and a maximum depth of 38 meters.

Several rivers drain westward from Lake Muskoka, including Moon River, which forms a path northwestwards by bare rock ridges. The lake is part of a series of lakes and rivers in the Muskoka area that flow into each other to reach Georgian Bay. Lake Muskoka is fed by Lake Rosseau and the Muskoka River (Muskoka Water Web, 2013).

The unique combination of the topography, water and vegetation of the area created the setting for human activities related to transportation, industry, water power and settlement.

2.2.3 Aboriginal History and Settlement

At the time of European contact, Anishinaabeg groups were living between Georgian Bay and the present-day Parry Sound area. It is thought that Iroquoian groups may have previously occupied lands nearing what is now the Muskoka area, and there were some Iroquoian groups located to the south in present-day Simcoe County. The Anishinaabeg groups were responsible for surrendering lands that were to become the Muskoka region to the Crown in the Robinson-Huron Treaty in 1850 (Holmes 6, 2000). The name Muskoka is thought to have come from an Anishinaabeg chief Musquakie (spellings vary) also known to the British as William Yellowhead (Dictionary of Canadian Biography, 1976). After surrendering land, the Anishinaabeg groups may have continued to use land in the Muskoka region for hunting and fishing.

Other aboriginal groups have a history in the Bala and Muskoka area. In 1881, a group of Mohawks, descendants of the Mohawks of the Five Nations (later Six Nations) confederacy, arrived in Gibson Township, west of Bala. The group left their previous location in Kaestake, Oka, due to increasing conflict amongst other Mohawk, Iroquoian, Algonquian and missionary groups at Oka, over land and timber rights, and religious conversion (Holmes 7, 2000). In June 1881, the Executive Council of Ontario authorized the sale of 25, 582 acres of land in Gibson Township to the seminary of St. Sulpice, for lands to be given to those willing to move from Oka. Heads of families would receive 100 acres each, and would be compensated for their improvements at Oka, and travel and expenses to Gibson Township (though they received less compensation than originally intended). In October 1881, 70 adults, 30 children between the ages of 5 and 15, and 33 children under 5 years of age relocated to Gibson Township. The group travelled through Bala on their way to the new lands (Holmes 11, 2000). Descendants of this group became known as the Wahta Mohawks, and many still reside in Gibson Township, on the Wahta Mohawk Reserve.

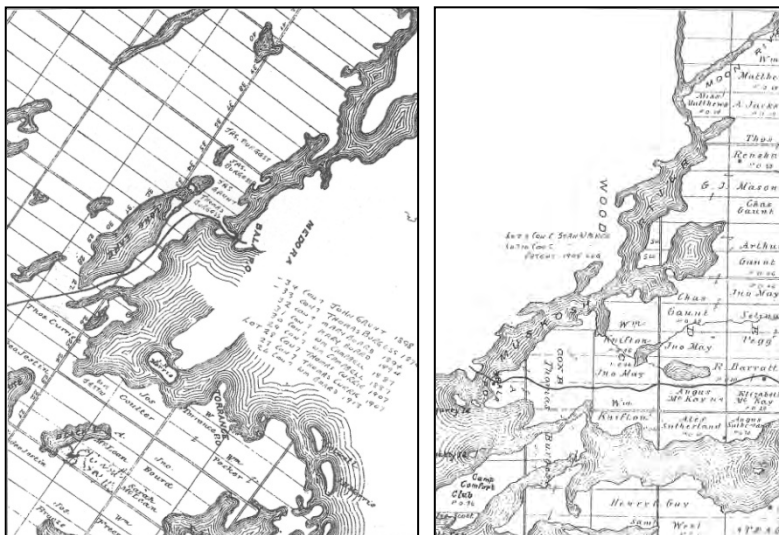
2.2.4 Euro-Canadian Settlement

Euro-Canadian presence in the Muskoka area began in the early 1800s, with the exploration and mapping of the Muskoka Lakes and other northern Ontario watercourses and land areas. Explorer Alexander Sheriff made mention of the falls at Moon River (then called the Musquash River) in 1829, and by 1830, cartographer David Thompson has embarked on mapping the area now known as Muskoka.

In 1850, the Honorable John B. Robinson, chief Justice of Upper Canada, and later Lieutenant Governor, signed a treaty with the chiefs of the Ojibwa Nation for a parcel of land extending between Penetanguishene, Sault Saint Marie, and the Ottawa River.

After exploration and mapping had begun, interest in the area's timber resources began to grow, and in the mid 1850s, timber licenses were issued for the wider area between the Severn River, Musquash River (Moon River) and the Segwun River south of Parry Sound, and logging companies arrived.

The creation of the Free Grant and Homestead Act in 1868 resulted in the creation of the Muskoka District, and the encouragement of settlement in the area. Under the Free Grant and Homestead Act, settlers would receive land grants of 100 or 200 acres in return for clearing and cultivating the land (Muskoka Genealogy Group, 2013). A number of Townships within the Muskoka District were surveyed in the late 1860s and 1870s, including Medora and Wood Townships, where Bala would come to be located. This era also saw the survey of the road from Gravenhurst to Bala (Petry 6, 1998).



Above: Plates 1 and 2: Excerpts of late 19th and early 20th century maps of the surveyed Medora and Wood Townships. Source: Petry: *Bala, an early settlement history*.

Even prior to the survey of Wood Township, travelers and tourists were arriving in the Muskoka area, arriving by boat in Washago (at the northern tip of Lake Couchiching) from Belle Ewart (Innisfill, Simcoe County) and then travelling by stage coach or on foot to Gravenhurst (Petry 6, 1998).

One early traveller, Thomas Burgess, took this route and then travelled by boat to the Bala area, where he stopped at an abandoned lumber camp. Burgess obtained a crown grant for 1000 acres, and settled on the land between what is now known as Bala Bay and Lake Muskoka (Petry 6, 1998). Burgess constructed a saw mill located on what is now known as the Mill Stream shortly after arriving in Bala (Sutton 3, 1967).

Over time, Burgess and his family established a number of the early amenities of the community, including a general store, blacksmith shop, bakery, and ran a supply boat. Burgess also donated land for the community's first church, and provided accommodation for the first school (Petry 8, 1998). Burgess named the community Bala, after a town in Wales that he has visited. The word Bala was a Welsh term for the place of river out-flowing to a Lake (Petry 1, 1998).

Other settlers joined Burgess in the Bala area, including Henry Guy and family, William Knifton, E.B. Sutton, the Hamill family, George Clements, Ernest Goltz, Richard Moore and family, Henry Hurling, Sam Hurling. Thomas Wilson, Nathaniel John Orchard, Robert Cope, Edwin Huggett, Thomas Renshaw, William Carr, William McDevitt, John Board, and Henry Weismeiller, and others (Petry 8-10, 1998). More detailed information on these early settlers and their livelihoods can be found in local history texts, and will not be provided in this report unless related to resources contained within the study area.

As settlers continued obtaining crown grants of land along the Moon River in the late 19th and early 20th century, cottagers began purchasing land along the waterfront from settlers, establishing an early history of seasonal, tourist or recreational use of the area (Petry 11, 1998).

The community of Bala was incorporated as a town in 1914, but had not previously been identified as a village – the only community in Muskoka to reach village status without having done so (Sutton 17, 1967).

2.2.5 The falls, the mill stream, and hydroelectric power

The falls at Bala are the result on human intervention on the landscape. Prior to human intervention, the rocky shield formed a natural dam between Lake Muskoka and Moon River. What is now known as the South Channel was a much shallower cut in the rocky ridge, and carried water only during periods of high runoff (Andreae and Letourneau 6, 2013).

Beginning in the 1870s, shortly after Euro-Canadian settlement in Bala, dams were constructed to regulate the water level of Lake Muskoka, which could vary as much as 2.7 metres or nine feet per year. High levels of lake water in the spring and flooding along the shoreline, and lower levels in the summer and fall were a hindrance to early steam navigation (Andreae and Letourneau 6, 2013; Pryke 39, 1987).

A dam was constructed at the North Channel in 1873, but the dam kept the lake level too high (Pryke 6, 1987). Following this, in 1875 a channel was blasted to the south of the dam, where seasonal runoff usually occurred. The blasting resulted in the creation of the human made island, known as Burgess Island. By 1878, a regulating dam was constructed at this new channel, meant to work with the previous dam at the North Channel to regulate the lake level, by allowing increased flood water discharge (Pryke 6, 1987; Andreae and Letourneau 7, 2013). Over time, both the North and South Channels have been widened.

What is known as the Mill Stream was once part of the original channel of the Moon River. After his arrival in Bala, Thomas Burgess constructed a saw mill and dam along the watercourse. The mill and waterwheel operated until the early 20th century (Jewitt 5, 2005).

Use of the water for hydroelectric power has occurred in Bala since 1917, when D. Sandy Burgess established the Bala Electric Light and Power Plant to serve the town of Bala, and other nearby communities. The 245 Kilowatt generating station was located where the previous Burgess dam and sawmill had been constructed, on the Mill Stream (Jewitt 51, 2005).

In 1924, another generating plant was constructed in Bala, beside the North Falls on Burgess Island. This new plant worked in conjunction with the one on the Mill Stream, supplying power to Bala and surrounding communities. In 1929, Ontario Hydro purchased the Bala Light and Power Company. A larger generating station, constructed by Ontario Hydro in 1938, would eventually lead to the closure of the Bala generating stations. The generating station at the North Channel operated until 1957 and was demolished in 1972 during dam repairs (Jewitt 52, 2005).



Plates 3 and 4: Views of the hydroelectric plant constructed at the north falls in 1924. The generating station was removed in 1972. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

2.2.6 Resorts and tourism

Travellers, tourists and cottagers began arriving in the Muskoka area nearly at the same time early settlers did. This section provides an overview of some of the key elements of the cottage, tourist and recreational history associated with Bala. Much of this history is similar to, or related to the wider Muskoka area. Numerous books describe the history of the wider Muskoka area, and have been consulted for further reference. For the purposes of this report, only information relating to Bala has been included, but it is important to note that Bala's history of tourism, cottages and recreation is part of a much wider pattern and context that is apparent in the broader Muskoka area.

Boats and steamships

A number of steamboats travelled across Muskoka Lake in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, bringing people to and from Bala. Boats were also responsible for driving log booms to the numerous saw mills on Lake Muskoka and the Musquash River (Petry 79, 1998).

The first steamship on Muskoka Lake was called the Wenonah, an aboriginal term for “first daughter”. It is thought that early settler Thomas Burgess would have arrived in Bala via the Wenonah. The Wenonah travelled between Gravenhurst, Bala and Torrence, transporting people, supplies, grain and farm animals for settlers. The boat reportedly once was caught in the falls at Bala, perhaps on a log drive. The boat was a wood-burning

steamship, 80 feet five inches long, fifteen feet and nine inches wide. The Wenonah operated between 1866 and 1871 on Lake Muskoka, and after 1871 traveled between Bracebridge and Bala on a tow tug run (Petry 79, 1998; Jewitt 9, 2005).

Numerous other steamboats served Bala, including the Amic, Cherokee, the Islander, the S.S. Gypsy, the S.S. City of Bala, the Oriole, the R.M.S Medora, R.M.S Seguin, the Rosseau, the S.S. Mildred, the Pickerel, and likely many others. Many of these boats were passenger boats that also carried supplies, travelling between communities on Lake Muskoka. The steamships docked at a wharf constructed at Bala, located northeast of the North Channel. Others docked outside the Bala Falls Hotel, south of the South Channel.

Steam boats continued operating in Bala into the 1950s. Likely by this time, the increase in automobile traffic led to their decline.

Railways

The railway was the second key mode of transporting people to and from Bala. Surveys for the railway began in the late 19th and early 20th century, and by 1904 construction of the Canadian Northern Railway line was underway. Initially, a small wooden hut, serving as a station, was constructed a few kilometres north of Bala near the community of Dudley. The stop was not a regularly serviced one, and passengers reportedly had to flag the train down. The line crossed



Plate 5: Historical photograph of the Oriole steamship arriving in Bala through the swing bridge. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.



Plate 6: Historical photograph of the steamship dock on Lake Muskoka, beside the railway station. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

between Bala Bay and Lake Muskoka over a swing bridge. The line came under ownership of the Canadian National Railway (C.N.R.) company then the Canadian Northern Railway went bankrupt.

The Canadian Pacific Railway Company (C.P.R.) also constructed a railway line in the Muskoka area, originally terminating at the Severn River. It was extended northward in the following years, reaching Bala in 1906-1907. By 1909, new bridges were constructed to improve/eliminate the grade crossings near Burgess Island. A second station was constructed closer to Lake Muskoka and the steam boat wharves. This station was demolished in 1957, and the earlier station was demolished in 1968. The decline in railway traffic, like the decline of steamboat travel, was likely due to increasing use of automobiles.



Plates 6 (top): Rock blasting for the construction of the railway, early 20th century. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

Plate 7 (bottom): The Bala 'summer station', located on Burgess Island. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.



Hotels and cottages

The first hotels in Bala were constructed in the late 19th century. The Temperance Hotel (later named the Bala Falls Hotel), constructed in 1889 was the first, followed shortly after by the Clifton House, built in 1890 by John Board Sr. The Bala Bay Wharf Inn was constructed in 1895. These hotels were located near the study area. William McDivitt purchased the Clifton House in 1900 and renamed it the Windsor Hotel. In 1907, the Windsor hotel burnt, and the Bala Falls Hotel burnt in 1910. Both were rebuilt shortly after (Jewitt 152-154, 2005).

The Roselawn Lodge was built for Thomas Burgess Jr. and his wife Isabelle in 1903. The family operated a popular tourist resort with main house and 15 guest cottages. The main building was destroyed by fire in 1940, but reconstructed. The resort was managed by the Nation family after the Burgesses (Jewitt 152-154, 2005).

The Swastika Hotel was the first brick hotel, constructed between 1910-1913 by E.B. Sutton and his son Fred. The name Swastika comes from the ancient good luck symbol. The name of the hotel changed several times to Sutton Manor, Bala Bay Lodge, Cranberry House, and to its present name, the Bala Bay Inn. The hotel still exists, and is located south of the study area (Jewitt 152-154, 2005).

From the late 1800s onwards, cottages have been constructed in Bala, on the lakeshore and river bank, islands, and inland. There are no cottages within the study area, but many are present in the views from the study area of Lake Muskoka and the Moon River. The population of Bala increases by thousands in the summer months, with seasonal residents and visitors to the area.



Plates 8 and 9: Views of the New Windsor Hotel. The image on the right shows the hotel after considerable modifications, and the addition of a boat house and bath house. The Medora steamship is pictured at its stop in front of the hotel. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

Recreation

Recreation tied to the outdoors and natural features in the area has been an important part of Bala (and wider Muskoka) life since the late 19th century. Visitors and seasonal residents have engaged in several outdoor activities in the area such as hiking, boating, canoeing or portaging, swimming, and observing the scenery of the area. These continuing activities from an important part of the historical associations and community value of the study area. Recreational activities in

the area have been and continue to be closely tied to hotels and cottages in the area, as well as day-trippers passing through.

Other non-outdoor activities have also been a part of Bala's history, such as dance halls. One of the earliest dance halls was located just outside the southeast end of the study area, where the



Plate 10: Boating on Lake Muskoka. Carr's dance pavilion is in the background. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.



Plate 11: Dunn's dance pavilion. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

Kee to Bala is now located. It began operating during the construction of the railway (c 1905) and was an open air pavilion.

A second dance hall was established in the early 20th century, when a second storey was added to William Carr's 1910 ice cream parlor beside the North Falls. The building was demolished in 1953 to make room for the new road bridge. Another ice cream parlour/dance pavilion was located on the Main Street.

Dunn's Pavilion, operated by Gerry Patrick Dunn, was constructed just southeast of the study area, facing the waterfront, in 1942. The pavilion attracted many big name musicians and bands, such as Louis Armstrong, Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller, Les Brown, Duke Ellington, Woody Herman, Mart Kenny and others. The pavilion could hold as many as 1,500 people and was frequently filled in the summer months. The building is now called the Kee to Bala, and still serves as a dance/entertainment venue (Jewitt 36-38, 2005).

2.3 Summary of historical themes

Settlement

The study area is associated with the theme of Aboriginal and Euro-Canadian Settlement, as it is located on lands once occupied by aboriginal groups, and was traveled by the Wahta Mohawk group during their relocation to Gibson Township. The land was also owned by Thomas Burgess, Bala's first Euro-Canadian settler who arrived in 1868. Burgess and his family established many of the community's earliest businesses and industries. A number of other settlers and seasonal residents arrived in Bala shortly after, laying the foundations for the community that exists today.

Logging

Logging was one of the earliest industries in Bala and the Muskoka area, due to the vast amounts of land containing hardwood tree species that were sparsely populated in the 19th century. Even during the early 20th century, when population in the Muskoka district had increased, logging was still common. Numerous saw mills were located on Lake Muskoka and the Musquash River, and beginning in the 1860s, steam boats helped drive logs across the lake and down river. Some



Plate 12: A steamship driving logs on Lake Muskoka.
Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

of the boats that drove log booms through Bala included the Wenonah, Wabamic, Nipissing, and Alporto.

Transportation

The theme of transportation in the study area has been recorded since the visit of David Thompson in 1837. Thompson, a cartographer, was mapping the Muskoka district and portaged along the Moon River at what would later become Bala. His account states that he traveled upstream from Georgian Bay to Muskoka, coming to a set of falls at what is now Bala. Entries from his journal note that the portage route was 100 yards to the right of the falls, where he and his crew camped for the night. Several theories have been put forth debating the precise route Thompson took to cross what is now the study area, and where he and the entered Lake Muskoka.

Some 30 years after Thompson's arrival in the area, passenger boats began carrying travellers and settlers to the Muskoka area, including steam boats like those mentioned in Section 2.4. Numerous steamboats traveled across Lake Muskoka from the late 19th century to the mid 20th century, connecting Bala and other lakeside communities for tourists and cottagers.

In addition to transporting settlers, tourists and cottagers, boats played a key role in local industries like logging, by tugging, driving log jams or bringing food and supplies to the many logging camps located along Lake Muskoka and the Moon/Musquash River.

Canoe portaging, from Thompson's early journey to present, remains an important cultural activity in Bala and the Muskoka area. Portagers frequently cross the study area to travel between Lake Muskoka and the Moon River.

The construction of the railway in the early 20th century resulted in further changes to the landscape of the study area, as additional



Plates 13-15, showing Boat, road/bridge and rail travel in the study area. Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

bridges were constructed to provide rail and road access. At present eight bridges are located within the study area. The arrival of the railway in Bala between 1904 and 1906 also brought tourists, cottagers and supplies to the area. The second station built in Bala was constructed near the lake (on a ridge between the tracks and the steamboat wharf), and connected to the steam boat dock by ramp.

Both the steamboat and railway methods of transportation were in decline in Bala by the mid 20th century, due to the increase in personal automobile travel. Today, most residents, cottagers and visitors access Bala from Highway 169.

Dams and hydroelectric power

Dams of some form or another have been located at the study area since shortly after the arrival of Euro-Canadian settlers in the late 1860s. After arriving at Bala, Thomas Burgess constructed a dam and sawmill on a channel of the Moon River, which is now known as the Mill Stream. The mill was removed in 1910, but was replaced with the Bala Light and Hydro Electric Power Plant was constructed there in 1917. Another generating station was constructed beside the North Channel in 1924, and operated until the 1950s. It was removed in the 1970s.

Dams were constructed at the North and South Channels beginning in the 1870s, including blasting to widen the South Channel. Dam replacements and reconstruction occurred in 1909, 1913 and 1958. Since the beginning of Euro-Canadian settlement in Bala, these dams and the associated falls have been key features of the landscape of the study area.

Cottaging, tourism and recreation

The theme of cottaging and tourism has been a part of Bala (and the wider Muskoka area) for nearly as long as permanent Euro-Canadian Settlement. Regular steamship travel brought people to the area in the late 19th century, to stay at hotels or seasonal cottages. The influx of seasonal residents to Bala continues to this day.

Recreation, particularly seasonal recreation for cottagers and visitors has been part of Bala since the early arrival of tourists. Lake Muskoka and the Moon River provide ample opportunity for water sports including swimming, diving, boating, canoeing/portaging and fishing. Dance halls (initially part of other businesses, like ice cream parlors) were constructed beginning in the early 1900s to provide a different type of recreational activity for Bala residents and visitors. Dunn's



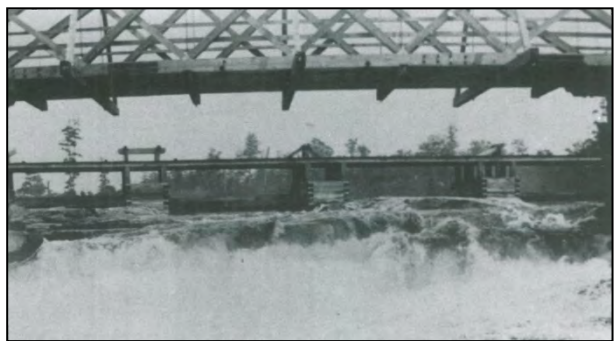
Plate 16: Boating on Lake Muskoka, with a tourist hotel across the lake Source: Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

Pavilion, located adjacent to the study area, is still in use as the 'Kee to Bala' a dance and entertainment venue.

Human intervention in the landscape

While many visitors and seasonal residents come to Bala and the Muskoka area for its natural scenery of water, rock and forest, the landscape within the study area is defined by human interventions in the landscape, from 1868 onwards. Human interventions have modified the original channel of the Moon River to form the Mill Stream, created dams and widened the North and South Channels to create the two sets of falls visible today, and constructed roads, rail lines and eight bridges that form a complex transportation network within the small area.

The human interventions of the dams and the resultant falls at the North and South Channels has become part of a cultural landscape that had been demonstrated to be significant cultural heritage value by the community.



Plates 17 and 18: Showing construction of dams and bridges at the falls. Petry, *Bala, an early settlement history*.

3.0 Study area resources and character

3.1 Introduction

This section provides descriptions of the resource types of the study area that were identified during fieldwork and consultation with the Municipality and Steering Committee. The locations of the resources within the study area are identified on Figure 2. A table containing more detailed descriptions of the individual resources is contained in Appendix A.

There are several different types of resources within the study area, including buildings, bridges, dams, roads, railways, public park areas and open space areas, water bodies, waterfalls and waterfront features. The character of the resource types is described in the following sections.

3.1.1 Built Heritage Character

The majority of built heritage features in the study area are bridges and water-control related structures.

There are 10 bridges within the study area. Some carry roads and railways across the north and south channels or the Mill Stream, others are road or rail overpass or underpass structures on the District Highway and Bala Falls Road. Many of the existing bridges have replaced previous bridge crossings at, or near the present sites. The older bridges in the study area date back to the turn of the 20th century while others were constructed in the last few decades. The complex network of bridge crossings provides access for trains, vehicles and pedestrians across the islands and lands within the study area. The continuation of the complex network of bridge, underpass and overpass structures is part of the ongoing theme of transportation evident within the study area.

The bridge structures within the study area are examples of different vernacular designs and different materials, such as steel girders, timber piles, concrete abutments, and stone piers. The bridges are functionally designed, and have little to no decorative embellishments. From the road bridges, views are available to the east and west of the lake and river, and to the falls below.

There are two dams, constructed at the north and south falls. A concrete dam was constructed at the North Channel in 1958, replacing an earlier 1909 structure. The concrete dam contains metal elements (railings and beams) at the top. The South Channel contains a 1958 concrete dam with metal railing and beam elements (similar in appearance to the North Channel Dam). Similar to the bridges, the dams are functionally designed with no architectural or decorative embellishments.

There are two buildings located in the study area: the Burgess Memorial Church and structure now known as Purk's Place, a boat rental and retail location. Purk's Place was constructed around the turn of the 20th century as a boat livery and ice cream parlour, and is of vernacular design, constructed to suit its function with no decorative architectural embellishments. The Burgess

Memorial Church, constructed in 1926, demonstrates influence of Gothic Revival architectural style, a style particularly popular for churches. The decorative elements of the church are understated, and its granite fieldstone construction suits the character and rocky surroundings of the area. Both structures have a relatively low profile (2-3 stories in height) and feature front gable roof features.

A number of structures are adjacent to the eastern boundary of the study area, including residential and commercial buildings (such as the Kee to Bala and former Dunn's Station) at 1000-1024 Bala Falls Road, the Bala United Church and commercial establishments along 3115-3119 Muskoka Road 169, and a residential property at 1006 Muskoka Road 38.

3.1.2 Waterfront and Water Feature Character

Waterfront and water features are dominant in the study area, and surround the study area on the north, east and west sides. Waterfront features or views of the water are visible from many points or other features within the study area.

The main water features in the study area are Bala Bay on Lake Muskoka and the Moon River. Bala Bay is a relatively calm body of water, with a rocky and vegetated shoreline, dotted with cottages and boat houses. The Bay once housed a steamship wharf that brought in numerous steamships and large numbers of seasonal residents, visitors and tourists.

The Moon River, located on the west side of the study area, flows from Lake Muskoka to Georgian Bay. The rocky and vegetated banks of the river are dotted with cottages, boat houses and docks. The moderate flow of the river (particularly at the study area) makes it a suitable and popular watercourse for recreational boating (particularly canoeing and kayaking).

Dams controlling the water flow from Lake Muskoka to the Moon River, and blasting to enlarge or create the North and South Channels results two sets of falls at Bala. Both channels have relatively shallow drops, but produce churning falls that are visible from bridges and Margaret Burgess Park. The rocky outcrop at Margaret Burgess Park is a popular location for locals, seasonal residents and visitors to experience the sights and sounds of the falls and surroundings.

The Mill Stream, located towards the southern end of the study area, is a relatively narrow stream exiting Lake Muskoka to the Moon River. The Mill Stream is named so because Thomas Burgess constructed a dam and sawmill on it after settling in Bala. The Mill Stream later fed the first hydroelectric plant in Bala.

Many of the public park or open space areas of the study area are located at the waterfront, including Portage Landing, Divers Point/Legris Park, Steamboat Wharf, and Margaret Burgess Park.

Some of these locations are named specifically in reference to their relationship to the water, such as Steamboat Wharf, Divers Point and Portage Landing, which are discussed in the following section.

3.1.3 Streetscape, Landscape, Park and Open Space Character

Human interventions to the landscape beginning in the 19th century and continuing to present day, combined with elements of the natural landscape, have resulted in a distinct setting with different streetscape, landscape, park and open space areas within (or immediately adjacent to) its boundaries.

The study area is distinct from many other landscapes that have become Heritage Conservation Districts. Unlike rural hamlets, towns or cities with a recognizable street grid and building setback pattern, the study area demonstrates the adaptation to a challenging landscape, with rocky topography and water features. The few structures within the study area are configured less in relation to the road than to the topography or natural features or function they serve. The study area features a more organic pattern than a geometric pattern that allows for a variety of views. Many views within the study area are foreshortened by curving roads, topography and vegetation, other and those that overlook the falls, lake or river, making views down the water to a more distant horizon very important.

The small number of buildings within the study area results in a large concentration of open space areas and areas with a naturalized quality. Public park areas, such as Margaret Burgess Park, Legris Park, and the Steamboat Wharf Dock all contain areas of open lawn. Margaret Burgess Park contains groves of 15 mature White Pine trees on the grassy lawn area, and a rocky outcrop of the river bank looking out to the North Falls. The mature White Pines are estimated to be over 100 years old and are iconic of the environment that made the area desirable for lumber and settlement (Radecki, 2011). The cenotaph area contains shrub plantings and boulders. Most of these areas are bordered by naturalized vegetation, particularly those adjacent to the railway line, which is bordered by shrub vegetation and some evergreens. The park areas also offer views of the surrounding landscape, with rocky shores of the river and bay, vegetation, and the water, and are popular viewing and recreational locations.

3.1.4 Transportation and Circulation Network Character

Within the small study area, much of the land is defined by transportation and circulation related elements, such as roads, bridges, parking areas and the railway. The roads and railway intersect or cross over one another at various points, aided by overpass/underpass structures. The nature of transportation in the study area has changed over time, from exploratory and settlement portaging, rail and steamship to primarily motor vehicles. Local transportation, in the form of

recreational boating and portaging remains a popular pursuit, and utilizes several of the open space/park areas, demonstrating the interrelatedness of the character elements in the study area. Parking lots areas provide spaces for residents and visitors to stop and experience the community.

3.1.5 Summary of Cultural Heritage Value

The combination of built features, streetscape, open space and natural landscape elements within the study area is the result of human intervention on, and cohabitation with, the Muskoka landscape. Elements within the study area are physical remnants or reminders of the various developments and themes in Bala's history, including aboriginal use, early settlement, the timber industry, tourism and seasonal residency, and transportation. There are a relatively small number of built features in the study area, and the types are limited to vernacular structures and bridges.

The built features and streetscape/landscape/open space character of the area is interrelated to the natural environment, having been shaped by it, and also by having shaped it. Views of Muskoka Lake, the Moon River, the North and South Falls, rocky shorelines and vegetation are available from several locations within the study area. The character of the area is representative of the Muskoka Area, but also unique to the community of Bala in the precise location and configuration of water, land, and human-made elements.

The character of the study area has already been recognized by the community in Bala for having cultural heritage value or interest. Four sites within the study area have been designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* (portage landing on Moon River, the Shield Parking Lot, the Township Dock on Lake Muskoka and the Burgess Memorial Church) for their physical or design values, historical or associative values, and contextual values. The twin stem Silver Maple Tree on Burgess Island and the White Pine grove in Margaret Burgess Park have been nominated for designation as Heritage Trees under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Physical elements of the study area have changed and will continue to change over time. Many built resources from Bala's early history have been removed or modified, but have been commemorated and continue to be valued by the community. The associative values of the study area, experienced by views to the lake, river and falls are an important component in maintaining the character of Bala. Human desire to experience the landscape (both natural and human-made) has been well articulated since the Romantic era, where elements of the 'sublime' and 'picturesque' in the landscape captivated the human spirit, and provided outlets for contemplation, spirituality, recreation and relaxation. These values became translated to the Canadian 'wilderness' in the 19th and 20th centuries, where the experience of nature and naturalized features was valued for its beauty and restorative power, and the northern landscape became a symbolic interpretation of the Canadian frontier. These elements contributed to the historical development of Bala as a tourist and recreational location, and continue to characterize the study area for present-day residents and visitors.

4.0 Integrity of study area resources

The resources of the area demonstrate varying levels of integrity, as the study area (and the town) has evolved over time. The study area is comprised of the collection of resources previously described. This section describes the integrity of the study area as a whole. Integrity refers to the degree that a heritage resource is intact, meaning whether it continues to contain heritage fabric or attributes. Integrity is not the same as condition, which refers to the physical state the resource is in. Something can be of high integrity but in poor condition, and vice versa.

The study area has evolved over time from a natural landscape with little evidence of human intervention, to a cultural landscape that demonstrates nearly a century and a half of human activity. From the late 1860s onwards, human activity has modified the landscape to create dams and falls, widen channels, and construct roads, railways, bridges, buildings, docks and parks. Over time the community has ascribed meaning to many of the resources within the study area. Most of the original features in the area, such as dams, bridges and roads and buildings have been replaced or modified since they were first built. However, the patterns and forms of many of these early modifications to the landscape, particularly the dams, road and rail alignments and bridges still remain, even if original heritage fabric is missing or has been modified. The dams and falls are physical remnants of more than a century of human intervention and water harnessing, and are associated with the theme of hydroelectric power generating that took place at the north falls from the 1920s to 1950s. These patterns and forms, and some intact resources, are physical reminders of several historical themes that define the study area and have been demonstrated to have cultural heritage value to the community.

The theme of transportation is still evident in the landscape today. The transportation network to Bala was first defined by water transport, by portage or steamboat, then by rail, and dominated by automobile from the mid 20th century onwards. While original fabric of the steamship wharf no longer exists, smaller recreational boating and portaging (associated with seasonal recreation and cottaging which came to define Bala in the late 19th century) is still evident and remains an important recreational activity within the area.

The two buildings in the study area have a high level of integrity, with original fabric (timber construction and cladding, vernacular design, stone, arched windows, decorative elements) still evident. Purk's place is still associated with recreation in the study area, continuing to operate as it originally intended – as a boat rental and supply store. The Burgess Memorial Church no longer serves as a church, but reflects the continued community development in Bala that began with the arrival of the Burgess family, for whom it is named. The mature vegetation in some parts of the study speaks to a long established settling.

In summary, the study area is defined by several historical themes: settlement, logging, transportation, dams and hydroelectric power, cottaging tourism and recreation. These themes

are all characterized under the umbrella of a primary theme: human intervention on the landscape.

While the integrity of individual resources within the study area vary, and changes to the landscape have continued over time, the integrity of the forms, patterns, and activities in the area continue to represent a number of historical themes that are important to the community.

5.0 Land use character and policy review

5.1 Introduction

The character of a Heritage Conservation District derives largely from the heritage attributes of the physical environment: buildings, structures, surrounding spaces, and distinctive plantings such as tree lines and tree canopies. The designation of a Heritage Conservation District is intended to assist in the protection and conservation of these features and their attributes by maintaining heritage elements free from any adverse physical changes, and ensuring that new development complements and is compatible with the existing heritage resources within the area.

The control of physical change to properties, buildings and structures within a Heritage Conservation District falls under the purview of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. The use of lands and property, the configuration and placement of buildings on lots, and a variety of other provisions relating to physical development is governed by a number of provisions under the *Planning Act*, such as Official Plans, Zoning By-laws, and Site Plan Control.

Accordingly, a number of planning policies and control mechanisms are examined in this section, including the District of Muskoka Official Plan, Township of Muskoka Lakes Official Plan, Township of Muskoka Lakes Zoning By-law, Site Plan Control, Property Standards By-laws, and Sign By-laws. The purpose of this review is to ensure that there is no conflict with conservation initiatives, as well as to identify opportunities to encourage sound heritage conservation planning by advocating complementary changes to planning policies and guidelines.

5.2 Study area resources and land uses

The study area primarily consists of open space land uses. The area contains several water bodies, bridges, transportation routes and parks that provide recreational activities to the area. A detailed inventory is included in Appendix A of the report.

The study area contains two built heritage resources: Purk's Place, constructed as a boat livery which now supplies canoe rentals and fishing equipment, and the former Burgess Memorial Church.

A more detailed discussion of land uses can be found in section 5.3.3, Township of Muskoka Lakes Zoning by-law.

5.3 Study area policy review

Municipal planning policies typically set the context for the broader pattern of development in any community, and are usually implemented by an array of more specific policy initiatives under the *Planning Act* and the *Municipal Act*, such as zoning by-laws, site plan control by-law, and property standards by-laws. The following subsections identify some key policies and tools, and examine either potential for conflict with heritage conservation management, or opportunities for change. Other municipal policies and guidelines, such as management and master plan documents relating to capital and other physical improvements will be more specifically reviewed as part of the Heritage Conservation District plan should it proceed.

5.3.1 District of Muskoka Official Plan

The Official Plan of the Muskoka District Area, which was recently consolidated in March 2014, contains objectives and policies pertaining to the management and direction of physical change and decisions affecting the use of land, implements Provincial legislation, and provides a broad policy framework for local Official Plans and By-laws. The Muskoka Official Plan does not have a specific terminal year as its horizon and the goals, objectives and policies will be subject to continuing review.

The community of Bala is designated as an Urban Centre on Schedule A of the Official Plan. The Urban Centre designation applies to rural, urban and waterfront service centres which are expected to grow in both population and physical size. Local Official Plans address specific development issues, particularly the scale and function of development within Urban Centres.

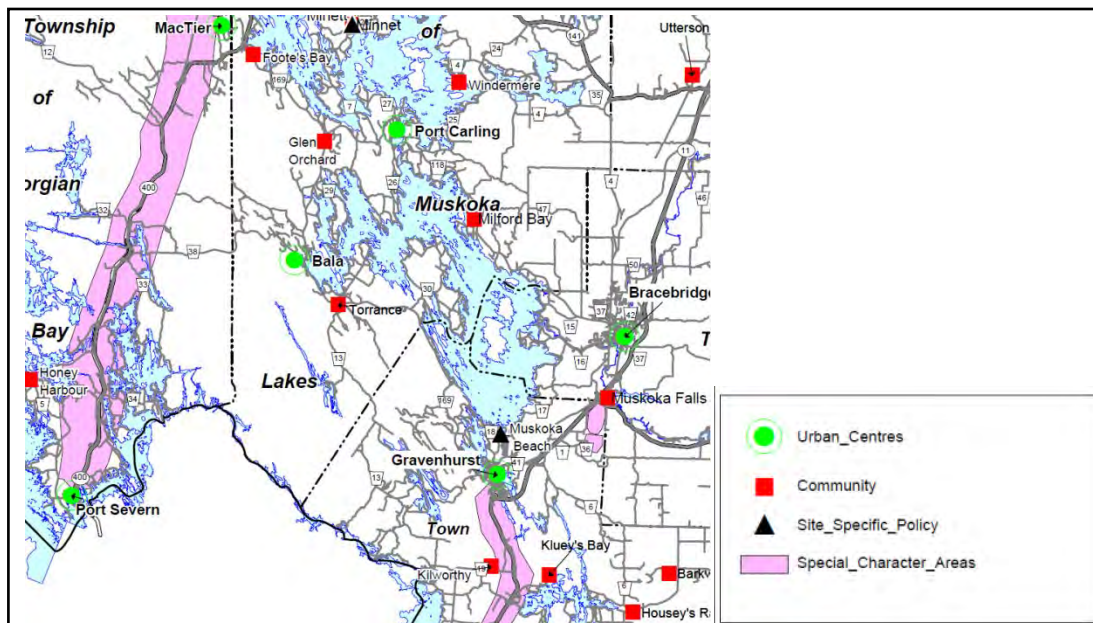


Plate 19: Excerpt from Official Plan of the Muskoka District Area, Schedule A

With regards to heritage, broad policies pertaining to the protection of significant natural and cultural heritage areas are found within the District Official Plan. These policies outline that the quality of natural and cultural heritage found in areas must be preserved.

5.3.2 Township of Muskoka Lakes Official Plan

The Official Plan for the Township of Muskoka Lakes underwent a planning review in 2007-2009. The Official Plan is meant to guide land use planning decisions for a planning period of 20 years.

The Bala Settlement Area is designated in the Township of Muskoka Lakes Official Plan as an 'Urban Centre'. The Urban Centre designation identifies that Bala (and Port Carling – the other designated Urban Centre) will be the location for the majority of growth and development within the Township. The policies of the Official Plan set out a policy framework whereby the accommodation of future growth and development will be managed to ensure growth complements and sustains the natural environment and character of the community.

Section C.4 of the Official Plan identifies that 'character' is a key distinguishing factor and that character provides a sense of identity that distinguishes Bala from other urban centres. The policies of the Official Plan are intended to protect and promote the identifying character of Bala while at the same time encouraging innovative development. The conservation of cultural heritage resources is a component of maintaining the community's character. The policies in the

Official Plan provides for the establishment of Heritage Conservation Districts and set out a process for the development of a Heritage Conservation District, consistent with the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The Township of Muskoka Lake's Official Plan contains the following criteria to be met when preparing a Heritage Conservation District study:

- i) Pass a by-law defining an area or areas to be examined for future designation as a Heritage Conservation District(s).*
- ii) Prepare a study for the area or areas to determine the feasibility of designation, the delineation of the Heritage District boundaries and an evaluation of the area's historic character.*
- iii) The study will be prepared in accordance with Ontario's Heritage Conservation District Guidelines prepared by the Ministry of Culture (Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport).*
- i) Public participation will be encouraged in the preparation of the study.*
- ii) Heritage District Planning Guidelines may be prepared after the approval of the designation of the Heritage Conservation District by the Ontario Municipal Board. The guidelines can include policies to guide council in the approval of permit applications for new development and alterations to properties located within the Heritage Conservation District.*

The policies of the Official Plan also identify that development and site alteration on lands adjacent to heritage property must demonstrate that the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be conserved.

The land use policies that apply to Bala are sections C.1 through C.18 and C.20 of the Official Plan.

The majority of the study area is designated Core Commercial, as identified below, with a small section of the northern portion of the study area designated Institutional.

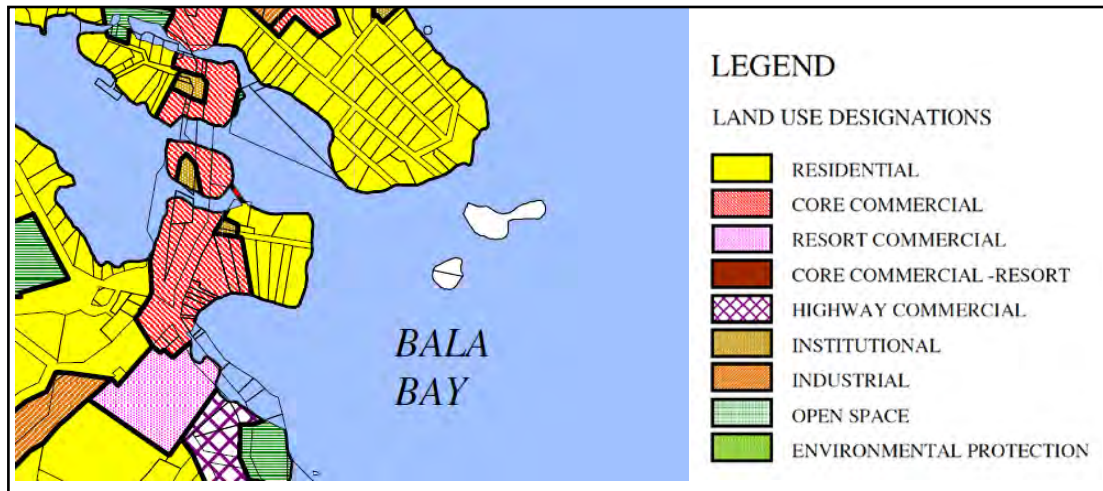


Plate 20: Excerpt from Township of Muskoka Lakes Official Plan, Schedule G1

The Core Commercial designation is intended to function as the primary retail and service commercial centre and provide administrative, cultural and recreational activity for the community. The Core Commercial designation permits retail and general commercial activities, including offices, dining establishments, and places of entertainment. This designation also recognizes resort commercial uses, hotels and motels, and marinas.

Uses within the Institutional designation may include municipal facilities, churches, schools and service clubs.

5.3.3 Township of Muskoka Lakes Zoning by-law

The lands within the study area are zoned for commercial (C3 – Community Commercial), open space (OS1 – Open Space-Public), and institutional (I – Institutional) uses.

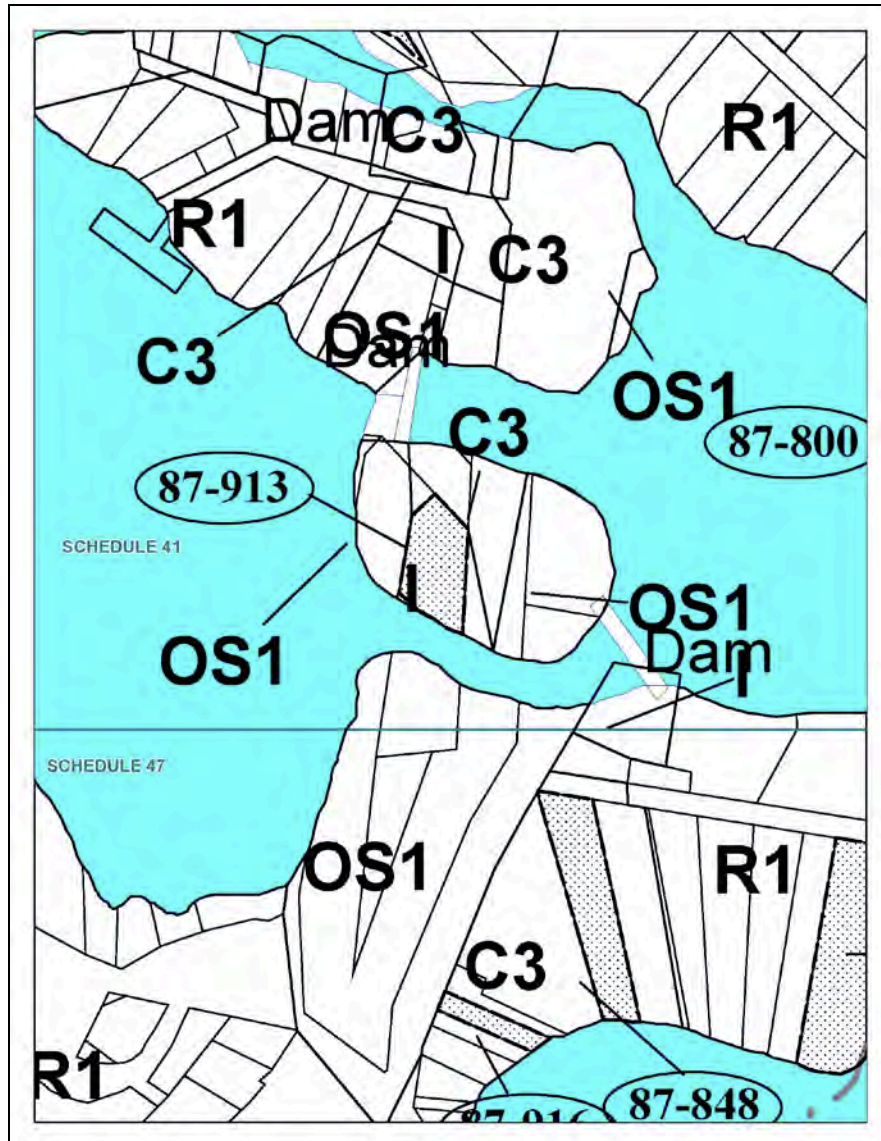


Plate 21: Representation of Township of Muskoka Lakes Zoning by-law 87-87

Permitted uses within the C3 zone include: clinics, convenience stores, offices, personal service shops, places of amusement, restaurants, retail stores and taverns. Multiple residential dwellings are also permitted. The maximum building height permitted is 30 feet (approximately 3 storeys). Lands within the C3 zone are limited to the property known and Purk's Place and a Township owned piece of land that functions as a parking lot.

The OS1 zone permits a broad range of recreational and institutional uses including agricultural uses, conservation, forestry operation, hunt camps, museums, open space recreation and wayside pits or quarries. The OS1 zone in the study area includes open space lands owned by the Township and the Province.

The I zone permits a broad range of institutional uses including nursing homes (or retirement homes or homes for the aged), arenas, curling club or service clubs, churches, places of worship, educational institutions, nursery schools and residential use (in the form of a dwelling) as accessory to any of the previously listed uses. The maximum height permitted is 40 feet. The lands within the I zone in the study area are limited to the property known as the Burgess Memorial Church.

5.3.4 Site Plan Control

In some Heritage Conservation Districts, it has become a standard practice to use Site Plan Control provisions authorized under the *Planning Act* to complement the development review mechanisms of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

In some municipalities, any property designated under the provisions of the *Ontario Heritage Act* is subject to Site Plan Control pursuant to Section 41 of the *Planning Act*. Development which involves new construction, or making alterations or additions to an existing building or structure to allow a substantial increase in size or usability requires the approval of municipal Council (unless authority has been delegated).

Site Plan Controls allows the municipality to require facilities or improvements to the subject site, and in particular address matters such as landscaping and some architectural details (such as elevations) in the review of the proposed development of a property.

Whereas the provisions of the *Ontario Heritage Act* are concerned primarily with the details of changes to properties as a means to conserve the character of the property, Site Plan Control seeks to ensure that an acceptable standard of site amenity and maintenance is achieved. Site Plan Control and Heritage Conservation District permits have considerable potential to complement each other, although procedures and differing time spans for processing applications may be considered cumbersome.

Site Plan Control within the Township of Muskoka Lakes is governed though the Site Plan Control By-law (By-law 2006-100). The whole of the Township is designated as a Site Plan Control Area for the Municipality; however certain types of zones and development are exempt from site plan control. Given that the majority of properties within the potential future Heritage Conservation District would be public property, there would be limited application of site plan control. However, the opportunity to implement the goals and policies of the future Heritage Conservation District Plan though site plan control should be further evaluated during the development of the plan.

5.3.5 Property Standards By-Law

The Township of Muskoka Lakes currently has a Property Standards By-law (99-34), which provides for general direction related to the maintenance and occupancy of residential property within the Municipality. The By-law covers various matters related to the interior and exterior of buildings, such as outdoor maintenance, structural, electrical, plumbing, heating, and elements such as porches, windows, egress, and chimneys.

Some municipalities have specific property standards related to heritage buildings to ensure that heritage buildings meet a minimum standard of maintenance. Given that there is limited opportunity for residential development within the proposed Conservation District Plan area, there is little value in identifying specific standards for heritage buildings as a means of implementing the future Heritage Conservation District. However, this should be evaluated further during the Heritage Conservation District planning process.

5.3.6 Tree Preservation

District designation under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act* extends potential protection to trees as part of the definition of 'property' contained in the Act. They are often significant features within the landscape, and as worthy of conservation and management as they built environment.

The *Municipal Act* enables Councils to pass by-laws for the preservation of trees and the Township of Muskoka Lakes has a Tree Preservation By-law (2008-55). The Tree Preservation By-law provides for protection of trees within 200 ft of a navigable waterway in the waterfront designation and all lands zoned Scenic Corridor or Scenic Area in the Zoning By-law, amongst others. Exemptions are provided for circumstances such as the removal of diseased or dying trees, trees that are part of orchard, nursery or Christmas tree farm plantations, and trees measuring less than 25 mm (1 in) DBH, as well as when removal of trees is required in order to erect any building, or structure for which a building permit is issued.

5.3.7 Sign By-Law

The Township of Muskoka Lakes has a Sign By-law (By-law 99-100), which contains information and regulations related to the installation of signs. The Sign By-law addresses regulations with

respect to sign size, type and location. The By-law permits signs only on lands zoned or regulated for commercial or industrial uses, unless otherwise permitted.

5.4 Heritage conservation and financial incentives

Currently the Township of Muskoka Lakes has no regular funding initiatives in place that can assist in the implementation of its heritage conservation programs for properties designated under Parts IV and V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

The authority to provide financial incentives to heritage resource conservation is established under both the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the *Municipal Act*. Sections 39 and 45 of the *Ontario Heritage Act* provide that municipalities may establish by-laws to make grants or loans to other owners of designated heritage properties and Section 365.2 of the *Municipal Act* makes provisions for enabling municipal tax rebates to such properties.

Financial incentives for heritage conservation efforts include municipal tax incentives, loans and grants. Municipal tax incentives allow municipalities the ability to provide property tax relief to heritage buildings. Grants and loans may be granted to heritage property owners to assist in the restoration and conservation of heritage resources.

The Heritage Conservation District plan (if prepared) will provide clearer direction on a successful strategy of financial incentive through a system of heritage grants.

6.0 Heritage Conservation District Delineation: A recommended boundary

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of the Heritage Conservation District Study is to determine whether an area has merit and to recommend a boundary. The Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport (MCTS) has noted in its published guidelines "Heritage Conservation Districts: A Guide to District Designation Under the *Ontario Heritage Act*" that areas that merit consideration as a Heritage Conservation District typically display a number of characteristics:

- *"A concentration of heritage buildings, sites, structures; designed landscapes, natural landscapes that are linked by aesthetic, historical and socio-cultural contexts or use.*
- *A framework of structured elements including major natural features such as topography, land form, landscapes, water courses and built form such as pathways and street patterns, landmarks, nodes or intersections, approaches and edges.*
- *A sense of visual coherence through the use of such elements as building scale, mass, height, material, proportion, colour, etc. that convey a distinct sense of time or place.*
- *A distinctiveness which enables districts to be recognised and distinguishable from their surroundings or from neighbouring areas."*

These characteristics are also useful in identifying a recommended boundary.

In addition to the MCTS guidelines, the Township of Muskoka Lakes Official Plan contains the following provision for identifying the merit of an area for designation and identifying a boundary:

- ii) Prepare a study for the area or areas to determine the feasibility of designation, the delineation of the Heritage District boundaries and an evaluation of the area's historic character.*

The following section summarizes the key characteristics of the study area based on the inventory undertaken, and provides a discussion of boundary delineation and rationale.

6.2 Summary of the Bala study area character

The study area contains a number of distinctive cultural heritage features and attributes, as described in sections 2 and 3 of this report. The significance of the study area is an evolved dynamic environment, containing a combination of natural and cultural features, and is the result of over a century of human intervention on the landscape. The study area contains portions of Bala Bay on Lake Muskoka, the Moon River, North and South Falls, the Mill Stream, eight bridges or overpass/underpass structures, two dams, public park and open space areas, two buildings, two roads and two parking lots. The area contains, and is surrounded by distinctive Muskoka scenery including pine (and other evergreen) and deciduous vegetation, rocky granite from the

Precambrian Shield, and watercourses. Harnessing the waters for energy and utilizing other natural resources in the area has also shaped the evolution and character of the study area.

Views are an important part of the visual character of the study area. Significant views from within the study area include views of the north and south falls, views of Bala Bay, views of the Moon River, and views of the curvilinear Bala Falls Road (including the view of the road through the underpass at the railway). Views of the water features within the study area are available from Steamship Wharf, road bridges, the Cenotaph, The Shield Parking Lot, Diver's Point and Margaret Burgess Park. Views outside looking towards the study area, of the falls (from the public dock on the Moon River) and the rocky outcrop at Margaret Burgess Park, and of the Bala Bay shore are available from the surrounding shorelines.

Early use of the area by aboriginals, explorers and the timber resource industry have left few marks on the landscape (other than the Silver Maple native marker tree, and the White Pine Groves in Margaret Burgess Park), but are important associative values that contribute to the character of the study area. The area was historically, and continues to be today, a popular location for local and seasonal residents, visitors and tourists to enjoy the scenery and recreational activities such as boating, swimming and portaging. The study area was once a hub of transportation for steamships, railway transport, and recreational boating, though many of the remnants from the late 19th and early 20th century have been removed, such as the railway station, steamship wharf, and early hotels and resorts. Those that do remain are important in defining and maintaining the character of Bala's special past.

The rich history of Bala extends beyond the borders of the study area, to include aboriginal settlements, cottages and hotels, stores, churches, and the iconic scenery. Other areas in Bala that contribute to the story of its development may merit future study or consideration as extensions of the proposed study area Heritage Conservation District, or as additional Heritage Conservation Districts.

6.3 District boundary delineation

The Ontario Heritage Toolkit produced by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport provides guidance on what may characterize Heritage Conservation Districts. The identification of these characteristics can help to define appropriate boundaries for a Heritage Conservation District. Sections 6.3.1 to 6.3.4 discuss the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport characteristics that are evident in the study area for Bala. Section 6.3.5 discussed potential development issues within or adjacent to the study area that were also considered when determining a recommended boundary for the proposed Heritage Conservation District.

6.3.1 Framework of structuring elements

The framework of structured elements in the study area includes the rocky topography, islands, shorelines, vegetation, Lake Muskoka and the Moon River, and the transportation road and railway and bridge networks. The framework of structuring elements in the study area contributes to defining its character, and provides visual indicators of the study area history and development.

6.3.2 Concentration of heritage resources

The concentration of resources within the site include both natural landscapes (lake, river, shoreline, rocky shield) and designed or human-made landscapes (the falls, the parks, location of former steamship wharf, former summer station, Shield parking lot, portage landings, Cenotaph). The relatively small size of the study area contains a high concentration of heritage resources, including eight bridges, two buildings, multiple open space or park sites that are remnants of the history of Bala, and significant vegetation. These are all linked by historical and socio-cultural context and uses such as settlement, tourism and seasonal recreation. There is also a concentration of resources adjacent to the study area, including lake shore and river bank, main street commercial features, cottages and vegetation.

6.3.3 Visual coherence of the study area

The study area has a sense of visual coherence due to the presence of water, rock and vegetation combined with human-made or modified elements such as dams, falls, roads, railways and bridges that have developed a patina of age over time. These elements are visible in views within and from the study area. The general absence of buildings (other than Purk's Place and the former Burgess Memorial Church) also provides a sense of visual coherence within the study area.

6.3.4 Distinctive character

The attributes previously described come together to create an environment and landscape that is distinct in its heritage character from the surrounding environment. The study area is distinct due to its rocky land forms located between lake and river, the vegetation, the dense transportation network of roads, railway and bridges in the small area, and the falls at the north and south channels. It is also distinct for the associative values of many of the sites within the study area that represent the historical development of Bala.

6.3.5 Proposed Boundary

Based on the discussions in the previous sections identifying the heritage character of the Bala Study area and the presence of elements identified by the MCTS that characterize Heritage Conservation Districts, it is concluded that the proposed study area boundary is appropriate for consideration as a Heritage Conservation District. The key descriptors for the proposed boundary of the study are as follows (refer to Figure 1):

- The eastern boundary is the eastern side of Bala Falls Road from the southern intersection with the District Highway to the south-east corner of South Bala Falls Bridge, and then the northward view line towards the north-east corner of the Steamship Wharf Bridge (aka Access Bridge).
- The northern boundary is from north-east corner of the Steamship Wharf Bridge to the north-west corner of Mill Stream Bridge.
- The western boundary is on the west side of the District Highway from the north-west corner to the south-west corner of the Mill Stream Bridge, east to the south-west corner of the CP railway bridge, south along the western side of CP railway line to the north-east corner of the Township parking lot, west to the western side of the District Highway, south to the north-east corner of Margaret Burgess Park, westward along the northern side of Margaret Burgess Park to the Moon River, and then the southward view line towards the southern intersection of the District Highway and Bala Falls Road.
- The study area contains the north and south falls, all of Portage Island, and part of Burgess Island which also includes Margaret Burgess Park, and part of the Moon River and Bala Bay at Lake Muskoka.

The proposed Heritage Conservation District boundary contains lands owned by the Province, Township of Muskoka Lakes, the District of Muskoka, and private properties, including lands owned by the Canadian Pacific Railways. However, while the Crown lands within the study area may be contained within the Heritage Conservation District the *Ontario Heritage Act* states Part V of *The Act* does not apply to lands owned by the Crown or prescribed public bodies. It is recommended that the Crown lands remain within the proposed Heritage Conservation District Boundary, notwithstanding that the policies and guidelines of the HCD Plan will not apply to lands owned by the province, so that if in the future the lands are no longer owned by the Crown, the policies and guidelines of the HCD would apply.

6.3.6 Potential Development Issues

The study area consists of Township and District owned lands, some Crown property, property owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway, and an additional private property (the Burgess Memorial

Church). The study area is characterized primarily by open space areas, with some institutional and commercial land uses. The study area is located within an Urban Centre where there may be anticipated growth and development. The Community of Bala is located on moderate and high sensitivity water bodies and the surrounding water bodies contribute to the character of Bala.

Development within the Heritage Conservation District study area can be characterised by four broad categories: development on publically or privately owned lands, upgrades or expansions to transportation networks, renewable energy (namely hydroelectric power) infrastructure, and development on adjacent public or private properties. The intent of a Heritage Conservation District is to manage and guide change within applicable lands of the study area in order to minimize impacts to significant cultural heritage resources and attributes, including (but not limited to) built features, streetscapes, the falls, water levels, vegetation, natural and naturalized features, open space features, and views.

Development adjacent to a Heritage Conservation District can be as important as development within a district. In the context of a Heritage Conservation District, the definition of “adjacent” is derived from the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), and means properties contiguous to the boundary of a Heritage Conservation District. Properties not contiguous to the boundary such as those along the Bay or River would not be considered adjacent Heritage Conservation District.

Development of lands adjacent to a Heritage Conservation District could affect the character and heritage attributes of the district. Height, building type, form, and the impact on public views and vistas are important potential considerations. The Heritage Conservation District plan (if prepared) will examine this aspect further and may make appropriate recommendations to refine existing policies that guide the preparation of heritage impact assessments as well as the requirements of the Provincial Policy Statement.

6.4 Public Consultation

Public consultation for the Bala Heritage Conservation District Study was undertaken to gain feedback regarding the draft Heritage Conservation District Study and the proposed boundary. A community consultation meeting was held on Friday May 16th at the Bala Community Centre, between 4 and 8 pm. Notification regarding the community consultation meeting was provided by the Township to property owners and tenants within the study area. Newsletters were sent to the broader community by Canada Post mailbox in Bala. Several ratepayer associations were notified, including the Muskoka Lakes Association, Muskoka Ratepayers Association, and Moon River Property Owners Association. A press release was provided to the local media, and mention was made in the muskokaregion.com media newspapers on May 1, 2014 (page 3) and May 15 (page 3). The Muskoka Lakes Museum and the Muskoka Branch of the Architectural Conservancy

of Ontario were also notified. The Draft Study document and newsletter were posted on the Township of Muskoka Lakes website.

At the meeting, the community was invited to view panels and ask questions or provide comments during open house periods of the meeting, and following formal presentations that provided information about the Heritage Conservation District process, historical background of the study area, and its features. Feedback forms were made available to the public at the consultation meeting and on the Township website, asking respondents for their input on whether the study area boundary was appropriate as a Heritage Conservation District, what they thought were important things to consider in the Heritage Conservation District Study, and any other comments. Over 70 comments were received and have been considered in finalizing this report. The majority of comments indicated that the boundary for the proposed Heritage Conservation District was appropriate. A number of other comments identified the potential to include a larger area, containing historic commercial, residential and institutional properties along Bala Falls Road and Muskoka Road 169. A small number of comments did not see the proposed boundary as appropriate given land ownership/jurisdictions or pre-existing heritage designations.

A number of questions and comments at the public meeting related to the Heritage Conservation District process, namely how the implementation of a Heritage Conservation District would impact alterations or developments on private property within or adjacent to the district boundary. These questions and concerns will be addressed, and opportunity for public input will be provided, during additional public consultation that will be held as part of the Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines process.

6.5 Conclusions on the Boundary

The proposed boundary appropriately contains a collection of properties of cultural heritage value, including buildings, structures, streetscapes and open spaces, natural features and views of the falls, river and lake that together provide a rationale for the designation of this area as a Heritage Conservation District under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. There are approximately 34 inventoried features within the study area that contribute to its character and significance as the core of Bala (See Appendix A, and the descriptions of heritage character in section 3.0). It is evident through historical research, evaluation and consultation with the Steering Committee and community that the study area and the features contained within demonstrate cultural heritage value for the community, noted in the local histories that have been prepared, commemorative interpretive material, and designation under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act of Portage Landing on the Moon River, the Shield Parking Lot, the Township Dock on Lake Muskoka, and the Burgess Memorial Church.

It is concluded that there is merit in proceeding to the second phase of the Heritage Conservation District study, namely the preparation of a Heritage Conservation District plan containing guidance on the management of the district's character and attributes.

7.0 Recommended objectives of the proposed HCD designation and plan content

7.1 Introduction

As prescribed in the *Ontario Heritage Act* the planning and management of a Heritage Conservation District involves two stages: the preparation of a study followed by preparation of a plan. The key aim of the Heritage Conservation District Study is to detail the heritage character and attributes of an area and provide a rationale for designating the area as a Heritage Conservation District.

The Heritage Conservation District Plan is intended to provide the basis for the sensitive conservation, management and protection of the district's identified heritage features, notably the area's water bodies, bridges, transportation routes, parks, open spaces, buildings and cenotaph. The plan would provide a series of tailored guidelines for change both within the public and private realms of the proposed Heritage Conservation District.

The Heritage Conservation District Plan is also intended to provide guidance on a variety of other matters including changes to planning, development and policy matters as well as other municipal activities such as financial incentives, public works, and streetscape improvements.

At the core of designating any district is the implicit assumption that much of the conservation implementation related to managing physical change within the area will be undertaken in reviewing and making decisions about heritage permit applications under Part V of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. It is important that all potential participants in the decision-making process be aware of all those who will be using the Heritage Conservation District plan. The conservation district plan should be used and consulted by the following people, agencies and authorities:

- Property owners;
- Municipal Council;
- Municipal staff; and
- Local utilities.

Given the various diverse interests and values that may exist within the Heritage Conservation District plan area, it is important to recognize in a formal statement of intent the assumptions and objectives that are to be sought in conserving, protecting and managing the Heritage Conservation District. These are contained in the following sections and would form the part of the Heritage Conservation District plan if a decision is made to proceed with that phase of the district designation process.

7.2 Objectives of the proposed designation for the Bala Heritage Conservation District

Based on the research and evaluation undertaken as part of this Heritage Conservation District Study a number of key objectives would be further clarified and expanded through the Heritage Conservation District Plan process, including:

- To protect and enhance heritage property and views in both the public and private realm including existing heritage commercial buildings, institutional structures, road bridges, parks and open spaces, river corridors and associated trees and vegetations, and shoreline areas.
- To avoid the loss or removal of heritage buildings, structures and landscape fabric and encourage only those changes that are undertaken in a manner that if such alterations were removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the heritage property, materials and fabric would remain unimpaired.
- To encourage property owners to make continuing repairs and undertake maintenance of property in order to conserve or enhance the overall character and appearance of the District.
- To support the continuing care, conservation and maintenance of heritage properties wherever appropriate by providing guidance on sound conservation practice and encouraging applications to funding sources for eligible work.
- To encourage the maintenance and protection of the public realm of the District, as well as avoiding or minimizing adverse effects of public undertakings.
- To manage trees, tree lines and grass boulevards that contribute to the cultural heritage value of the District.
- To protect, maintain and enhance parkland and open space by encouraging changes that respect the open space and the vegetative character of the public realm.
- To prevent the establishment of those land uses and associated built forms and features which would be out of keeping with or have detrimental effects upon the character of the District.
- To permit new development only when it respects or otherwise complements the prevailing character of the existing heritage buildings and landscapes within the District.
- To encourage public realm improvements that respect the historical associations and attributes of the area as well as promote a pedestrian friendly environment that links Bala to adjacent areas.
- To promote an appropriate gateway feature, such as a landscaped open space, public art or other devices at the northern entrance to the district that respects the heritage character of this important entranceway into the district.

- To examine funding sources and adopt appropriate funding programs within the Township of Muskoka Lakes' capability to provide ongoing support to District property owners.

7.3 Bala Heritage Conservation Plan Content

It is expected that the Bala Heritage Conservation District Plan and Guidelines will contain a number of provisions that satisfy the requirements of Subsection 41.1(5) of the *Ontario Heritage Act*. Content that should be addressed in the Heritage Conservation District Plan includes:

- A statement of the objectives to be achieved in designating the area as a Heritage Conservation District.
- A statement explaining the cultural heritage value or interest of the Heritage Conservation District.
- A description of the heritage attributes of the Heritage Conservation District and of the heritage resources within the district.
- Design guidelines for alterations and additions to heritage buildings and structures, including facades and signage.
- Guidelines on new construction as infill development.
- Guidelines on demolition and removal of buildings and structures.
- Landscape conservation guidelines for both public and private property.
- Funding initiatives.
- Changes to municipal planning and administrative procedures.
- Descriptions of alterations or classes of alterations that can be carried out without obtaining a heritage permit under section 42 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

8.0 Conclusions

Based on site visits, historical research, evaluation of the study area features and community consultation, it is determined that the Bala Heritage Conservation District study area demonstrates significant cultural heritage value. The study area is a dynamic evolved landscape that has been altered by human activity in many ways throughout the last century and a half. These interventions have culminated in the distinct area evident today, containing cultural heritage features such as buildings, structures, roadways, railways, water features, open spaces, streetscapes and landscapes. In addition to the physical resources of the study area, there are strong associative values to the historical development of Bala and its many historical themes that are connected to the study area and its features.

The study area, particularly the falls, the surrounding landscape and use of the watercourses also have intangible value for the community. These intangible values include experiential values that residents and visitors gain from the falls as a place of relaxation, recreation or enjoyment. The physical elements that can be observed in the study area (described previously) create a setting for the intangible values.

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport outlines a common set of characteristics that may define a district, including:

"A concentration of heritage buildings, sites, structures; designed landscapes, natural landscapes that are linked by aesthetic, historical and socio-cultural contexts or use.

A framework of structured elements including major natural features such as topography, land form, landscapes, water courses and built form such as pathways and street patterns, landmarks, nodes or intersections, approaches and edges.

A sense of visual coherence through the use of such elements as building scale, mass, height, material, proportion, colour, etc. that convey a distinct sense of time or place.

A distinctiveness which enables districts to be recognised and distinguishable from their surroundings or from neighbouring areas."

The work undertaken for the Heritage Conservation District Study process finds that the study area meets all these criteria, supporting the proposed boundary delineation. It is recommended that a Heritage Conservation District Plan be prepared to identify policies and guidelines for managing change within the study area in order to conserve and enhance the cultural heritage value of the core of Bala.




It is acknowledged that there are potential cultural heritage resources (concentrations of built features, streetscapes and landscapes) outside of the study area that are directly related to the

historical themes, character and cultural heritage value of the study area. It is recommended that these areas could be considered in the future as extensions of a Bala Heritage Conservation District, or as additional Heritage Conservation Districts.

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APPENDIX A: Study Area Resource Inventory

	<p>Lake Muskoka</p> <p>Lake Muskoka is located in the northeast portion of the study area. The portion of the Lake in the study area is known as Bala Bay. Views of the lake are visible from many points on the eastern side of the study area. The lakeshore is lined with cottages and docks. The northern part of the bay, where a boardwalk path that includes a Township dock is now located, was the location of a steamship wharf from the late 19th to mid 20th century that brought many visitors and seasonal residents to the town.</p>
	<p>Moon River</p> <p>Moon River is located on the west side of the study area. It flows outward from Lake Muskoka, at the two sets of falls in the Study Area, to Georgian Bay. Views of the river, lined with rocky shores, forest, and cottages are available from the western side of the study area, particularly the sidewalk along Muskoka Road 169 and the rocky outcrop of the park, just northwest of the north falls. The frothy waters of the falls define the beginnings of the riverscape in the study area.</p>
	<p>North Bala Falls/North channel</p> <p>The area known as the North Channel is located between Burgess Island and Portage Island. It once was the outlet of seasonal runoff of Lake Muskoka, prior to the construction of dams after Euro-Canadian settlement to regulate the variable lake levels. The construction of a dam at the site results in falls flowing into the Moon River. Bridges carrying the railway line and Muskoka Road 169 cross over the North Channel, east of the falls. The road bridge offers views of the falls and Moon River to the west, and Bala Bay to the east.</p>

 <p>View of the north channel dam. MHBC, 2013.</p>	<p>North Dam</p> <p>The enlargement of the North Channel and construction of the North Channel Dam commenced in 1873 and was completed in 1874. The original structure is assumed to be constructed of timber crib piers with wooden stop-logs. Modifications to the dam were completed in 1886 and 1909. The current concrete dam with abutments was constructed in 1958.</p>
 <p>View looking southeast to South falls. Source: Tom Millar, 2013.</p>	<p>South Bala Falls/South channel</p> <p>The South Channel is located between Burgess Island and the mainland. The channel was previously a much smaller cut that carried water only during high lake levels. In the 1870s, a wider channel was blasted for the construction of a regulating dam to work in conjunction with the previous dam constructed just a few years prior at the North Channel. The widened channel and dam have created a second set of roaring falls in the study area. A combined dam and road bridge was constructed to replace the earlier structure (Andreae and Letourneau 13, 2005). These are most visible from the road bridges of Muskoka Road 169 and Bala Falls Road, lands north of the cenotaph, and from Diver’s Point. The railway bridge also crosses the South Channel, between the two road bridges.</p>
	<p>South Dam</p> <p>The North Channel Dam did not provide adequate discharge capacity during floods and as a result a second dam was constructed further south down the channel. In 1876 a stop-log dam was constructed. By 1899, the timber dam was replaced with one constructed of timber cribs. In 1913, the South Channel timber dam was rebuilt and redesigned as a combined dam and highway bridge.</p>



View looking north of the millstream, exiting Lake Muskoka. Source: Tom Millar, 2013.

Mill Stream

Prior to the construction of the dam at the North Channel and the creation of the South Channel, what is known as the Mill Stream formed part of the natural condition of the Moon River as it provides an exit for the water flow from Lake Muskoka. The construction of a dam and sawmill by early settler Thomas Burgess, and later construction of a small hydro-electric plant in 1917, likely altered the condition of the watercourse. Only a small portion of the Mill Stream is located in the study area. Views to the western section of the Mill Stream are available from the road bridge at the northernmost tip of the study area, as are views to the east where the watercourse flows from Lake Muskoka.



View looking southwards to Burgess Island MHBC, 2013.

Burgess Island

The landform known as Burgess Island is located in the centre of the study area. It was formed as an island by the opening of the South Channel in the 1870s. The island is named for the Burgess family, the first Euro-Canadian settlers in Bala, and who played an important role in the continued development of the town. The island is crisscrossed by Muskoka Road 169, Bala Falls Road and the Railway tracks. It contains the former Presbyterian Church, Purk's Place, an area known as Diver's Point, and what the community refers to as Portage Landings. Views from Burgess Island are of the North Channel and Portage Island to the north, Bala Bay to the east, the South Channel and the mainland to the south, and Moon River to the west.



View looking north to Portage Island.
Source: Tom Millar, 2013.

Portage Island

Portage Island is located north of Burgess Island. A portion of the island east of Muskoka Road 169 (including Steamboat Wharf), and Margaret Burgess Park beside the North Channel are included in the study area. The views to the east are of Bala Bay and the shoreline with forest and cottages, and the views on the west are of Moon River. The western portion of Portage Island within the study area is a popular viewing place of the North Falls.






View westward of Portage Landing at Lake Muskoka. MHBC, 2013.



Portage Landing on the Moon River and Portage Landing at the North Channel on Lake Muskoka

These two areas, located on Burgess Island, were identified by Heritage Committee members as being locations frequently used by portagers. The portage landing at Moon River is located on the west side of Burgess Island, between the two sets of falls. The landing on Lake Muskoka is located just west of Purks Place, on the northern side of Burgess Island. A portion of landing on the Moon River, being the landing on the northwestern side, is located on Ministry of Natural Resources Land and recently placed signs (2013) state that public use of the property is prohibited. Floats at the Lake Muskoka side prevent boaters from travelling westward, towards the dam.

Portage Landing on Moon River was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in April, 2013. This property is owned by the Township.



	<p>Steamboat Wharf on Lake Muskoka, a Township Dock</p> <p>The lakeshore in the northeastern part of the study area once served as a wharf for steamships that made regular visits to Bala, bringing seasonal residents, visitors and supplies. The wharf consisted of a dock and C.P.R. freight shed, and after the construction of the railway, a ramp connecting the wharf to the train station on Portage Island. Steamship travel ceased in the 1950s, and the wharf area now contains a boardwalk trail that leads along the lakeshore and across an access bridge over Mill Stream to the mainland. Views from the boardwalk to the west are terminated by vegetation and Portage Island, while views to the east are open and of Bala Bay. Steamboat Wharf on Lake Muskoka was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in April, 2013.</p>
<p>Northward of the former steamboat wharf. MHBC, 2013.</p>	
	<p>C.P.R. Bridge over Lake Muskoka</p> <p>The C.P.R. Bridge was constructed in 1991. During the replacement of the previous bridge c.1907 with this structure, the temporary support posts failed and the bridge collapsed. It was retrieved with cranes and reinstalled.</p>
<p>C.P.R. Bridge over Lake Muskoka. MHBC, 2013.</p>	
	<p>C.P.R Bridge over South Bala Falls</p> <p>The bridge was constructed c. 1907. The railway line was constructed through Bala in the early 20th century. It crosses Burgess Island and Portage Island on their east side. Views of the railway line are visible particularly from the highway bridge.</p>
<p>C.P.R. Bridge over South Bala Falls. MHBC, 2013.</p>	





	<p>South Bala Falls Bridge (Bala Falls Road)</p> <p>The road bridge is built atop remnants of the 1913 combined highway bridge and dam. The masonry piers are visible beneath the concrete. When constructed, the bridge deck was originally made of reinforced concrete supported by steel beam, but was replaced with a timber deck (date unknown).</p>
	<p>Bala Falls Road Underpass at Railway</p> <p>The underpass was constructed in 1909 after the Township took the CPR to court, due to the frustrations of a level crossing over 11 metre high railway embankments. The narrow underpass presented its own transportation challenges as vehicular traffic increased, until the new Highway 169 was constructed in 1965.</p>
	<p>Steamship Wharf Bridge (pedestrian)</p> <p>The bridge was constructed c. 1907 and provides pedestrian access across the Mill Stream and Bala Bay from the Township Docks at Steamship Wharf.</p>
	<p>Mill Stream Railway Bridge</p> <p>The bridge was constructed c. 1907. The railway line was constructed through Bala in the early 20th century. It crosses the Mill Stream where Lake Muskoka water flows into the Mill Stream.</p>

Bala Falls Road Bridge. Source: Tom Millar.

View looking northwest of the Bala Falls Road Underpass. Source: Tom Millar.

View looking north of the Steamship Wharf Bridge, MHBC 2013.

CP Railway bridge over the Mill stream. Source: Tom Millar.

	<p>Mill Stream Bridge Highway 169</p> <p>The present bridge over the Mill Stream was completed in 1967. The history of the original roadway bridge over the Mill Stream is related to the Musquash Colonization Road, constructed between Gravenhurst and Bala in 1872.</p>
	<p>Highway 169 Bridge over North Bala Falls</p> <p>The bridge was constructed in the 1965 when the new highway alignment was constructed. The original bridge was formerly part of the Musquash Colonization Road, constructed between Gravenhurst and Bala in 1872.</p>
	<p>Highway 169 Bridge over South Bala Falls</p> <p>The bridge was constructed in the 1965 when the new highway alignment was constructed.</p>
	<p>Highway 169 Underpass</p> <p>The original railway crossing was constructed in 1907. Original plans consisted of ramps built up to carry the road to a level crossing over the tracks. These ramps were too steep and the underpass was constructed in 1965.</p>

 A photograph showing a paved road with a yellow center line and a concrete guardrail on the left side. The road stretches into the distance under a clear blue sky. Trees and utility poles are visible along the roadside.	<p>Muskoka Road 169</p> <p>Muskoka Road 169 was formerly part of the Musquash Colonization Road, constructed between Gravenhurst and Bala in 1872. The alignment of Muskoka Road 169, between the two points of Bala Falls Road, was constructed in 1965, and is not part of the historic Colonization Road alignment (Andreae and Letourneau, 2013).</p>
 A photograph of a paved road curving to the right. On the left, there are parked vehicles and a utility pole. On the right, there are buildings and trees. A date stamp 'SEP 8 2013' is visible in the bottom right corner of the image.	<p>Bala Falls Road</p> <p>Bala Falls Road is the alignment of the historic Colonization Road constructed between Gravenhurst and Bala in 1872. Historically, the road followed the natural contours of the land, but over time portions of the road were raised, as seen from the high elevation of the road in front of the former Burgess Memorial Church (Andreae and Letourneau, 2013).</p>
 A photograph of a railway track running horizontally across the frame. The tracks are surrounded by dense green trees and bushes. In the background, a body of water is visible under a cloudy sky.	<p>Railway tracks</p> <p>The railway line was constructed through Bala in the early 20th century. It crosses Burgess Island and Portage Island on their east sides, and crosses the Mill Stream where the water flow from Lake Muskoka enters the stream. Construction of the railway line involved erecting steep embankments, altering the topography of the landscape. Views of the railway line are visible particularly from the road bridges.</p>

	<h3>Former location of the Summer Station</h3> <p>The second C.P.R. station in Bala was constructed within the study area, east of what is now a parking lot on Portage Island, between the railway line and the lake. The summer station, as it was known, was a frame structure that connected to the steamboat wharf by a wooden ramp. What is now a parking lot was a landscaped park area beside the station. Use of the station was discontinued in the 1950s, and it was demolished in 1957. The site, now vegetated strip of land, is accessible from a parking lot east of Muskoka Road 169. Views to the east of the location of the summer station are available from the Parking lot. Views from the former location of the summer station to the west are terminated by main street buildings.</p>
	<h3>Margaret Burgess Park</h3> <p>Margaret Burgess Park is located in the study area on Portage Island, north of the North Channel/North Falls and west of Muskoka Road 169. The park previously held an ice cream parlour and dance pavilion, but this was removed for construction of the Muskoka Road 169 Bridge. The park now contains picnic benches, mature pines, and a historical plaque detailing the settlement of Bala. The rocky outcrop near the North Channel is accessible from the park, for those able to climb down the rocks. From this rocky area, views of the dam and north falls are available, and the area is a popular place for local residents and visitors to enjoy the sights and sounds of the falls, or for swimming/sunbathing, and fishing. Views are of the falls and river, terminated by the dam and rocky riverbank, with vegetation and cottages.</p>

View looking east of the former summer station location. The station was located beyond the parking lot, on the ridge east of the tracks .MHBC, 2013.

View looking south of Margaret Burgess Park. MHBC, 2013.



View looking south of Purk's Place. MHBC, 2013.

Purk's Place

The building known as Purk's Place is one of two structures located within the study area. The building was constructed c.1900-1906 as a boat livery that rented canoes and row boats. The structure was previously located on Bala Bay where the C.P.R. Bridge crosses the North Channel. It was relocated shortly after construction with the arrival of the railway. Now known as Purks Place, it supplies canoe rentals and fishing equipment.

The building is a frame structure with clapboard cladding. It is built into the slope of the lakeshore, and is a single storey facing Bala Falls Road and two storeys facing the bay. The building features a front gable roof. The front facade contains a double door and a square window, and a single storey shed structure attached to the east side. The ear facade, facing the bay, features two sets of double doors leading to the dock.

The building is accessible from Bala Falls Road, and the docks located on Bala Bay beside the C.P.R. Bridge. Views to the north and east are of Bala Bay and the bridges between which the building is situated. Views to the west are of the intersection of Muskoka Road 169 and Bala Falls Road, and views to the south are of the Burgess Memorial Church. Views in several directions are terminated by vegetation.






View looking southwest of the Burgess Memorial Church. Source: Tom Millar, 2013.

Burgess Memorial Church (1035 Bala Falls Road)

The Burgess Memorial Church (now a residence and retail store) was constructed in 1926 as a Presbyterian Church, after a portion of the congregation declined to join the United Church, which merged Presbyterian and Methodist congregations. The church was named in honor of the Town's founder, Thomas Burgess.

The one and one half story church is constructed of unshaped granite stones. It has a front gable roof, with front gable vestibule with double doors. The building contains multi-paned pointed arch windows on either side of the vestibule, and regularly spaced along the sides of the structure. The basement level of the church is above ground, and features rectangular windows with

	<p>decorative window hoods. The property known as the Burgess Memorial Church was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in March, 2002.</p>
 <p>View looking west of the Cenotaph. Source: Tom Millar, 2011.</p>	<p>Cenotaph</p> <p>The Bala Cenotaph was constructed in 1965 by the Bala Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, which has formed in 1946. The Cenotaph honours those who served and perished in the First and Second World Wars. The inscription reads “In Memory of the Men of this area who made the Supreme Sacrifice”, and lists the names of Alfred Jackson Jr,(WWI), Alfred Edwards, Keith McDivitt and Allan McDonald (WWII).</p> <p>The Cenotaph is accessible from Bala Falls Road, and features a flagstone area, large decorative granite bounders, and park benches. Views to the west are primarily terminated by vegetation, but gaps in the vegetation allow for views of Moon River.</p>
 <p>View looking northeast of the shield parking lot Source: Tom Millar, 2013.</p>	<p>Shield parking lot</p> <p>The parking lot located between Muskoka Road 169 and the railway line, in the southern end of the study area, contains a historical plaque describing the Precambrian shield that is visible at the site. The parking lot is accessible from Muskoka Road 169. Views to the east are terminated by the shield. Views to the west are of the highway and the river beyond. Views to the north and south are terminated in vegetation and the shield. In the summer months the parking lot hosts the weekend market and outdoor concerts.</p> <p>The property known as the Shield Parking Lot was designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act in April, 2013.</p>

	<p>Heritage Maple Tree</p> <p>A twin stem Silver Maple tree on Burgess Island, south of the North Falls, has been nominated for Heritage Tree Designation. The tree is considered significant due to its age, and that it has grown on a rock outcrop with challenging growth conditions, and estimated by a certified arborist to be approximately 150 years old, and because it is considered to be a Native Marker Tree. The tree is primarily visible from the rocky area at the base of Margaret Burgess Park.</p>
	<p>Diver's Point/ Legris Park</p> <p>Diver's point, also known as Legris Park, is located on the east side of Burgess Island, facing Lake Muskoka. The property has been noted as for its recreational use by seasonal residents and tourists, for boating and scenic views and since the 1960s, scuba diving (hence the moniker Driver's Point). The name Legris Park honours Margaret and Garth Legris, founders of Communities in Bloom. Views from the park to the north and east are of Lake Muskoka and the shoreline. Views to the west are terminated by the railway embankment. Views to the south are terminated by Bala Falls Road. The park is accessed from Bala Falls Road.</p>
	<p>White Pine Grove</p> <p>The symbolic White Pine Grove in Margaret Burgess Park has been nominated for Heritage Tree Designation. The White Pine Grove is considered to be significant because of its contribution to the founding and settling of Bala by Thomas Burgess in 1868. The 15 trees in the White Pine Grove are a dominant feature within the park and are vital to the experience of the park setting and the "complete Muskoka experience".</p>



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