



AGENDA
Strategic Priorities Committee

April 16, 2024

9:00 am

Municipal Operations Centre

408 James Street South, St. Marys

YouTube Link - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCzuUpFqxcEI8OG-dOYKteFQ>

Pages

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST**
3. **AMENDMENTS AND APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the April 16, 2024 Strategic Priorities Committee agenda be accepted as presented.

4. **STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REVIEW**

4.1 COR 20-2024 Library Surplus/Deficit

3

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COR 20-2024 Library Surplus/Deficit report be received; and

THAT the Strategic Priorities Committee recommends to Council:

THAT staff be directed to proceed with:

Option 1: To maintain the status quo, Library surpluses/deficits are retained/funded by the Town, OR

Option 2: For staff to bring back a policy framework based on the discussion and direction of the Strategic Priorities Committee regarding the Library Board's request to retain their annual surpluses as outlined in staff report COR 20-2024 Library Surplus / Deficit; and

THAT staff be directed to include in the Library annual expenditures a reasonable cost for administrative and facility costs in order to properly reflect the full cost of Library services.

4.2 DCS 17-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning

8

RECOMMENDATION

THAT DCS 17-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning report be received as information.

5. NEXT MEETING

*All meetings are open to the public to attend in person and will be live streamed to the Town's YouTube channel.

May 21, 2024 - 9:00 am, Municipal Operations Centre Boardroom

6. ADJOURNMENT

RECOMMENDATION

THAT this meeting of the Strategic Priorities Committee be adjourned at _____ pm.



FORMAL REPORT

To:	Chair Stratthdee and Members of Strategic Priorities Committee
Prepared by:	André Morin, Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer
Date of Meeting:	16 April 2024
Subject:	COR 20-2024 Library Surplus/Deficit

PURPOSE

To provide the Strategic Priorities Committee with information relating to a request by the Library Board to retain any surplus operating funds on an annual basis.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT COR 20-2024 Library Surplus/Deficit report be received; and

THAT the Strategic Priorities Committee recommends to Council:

THAT staff be directed to proceed with:

Option 1: To maintain the status quo, Library surpluses/deficits are retained/funded by the Town,
OR

Option 2: For staff to bring back a policy framework based on the discussion and direction of the Strategic Priorities Committee regarding the Library Board's request to retain their annual surpluses as outlined in staff report COR 20-2024 Library Surplus / Deficit; and

THAT staff be directed to include in the Library annual expenditures a reasonable cost for administrative and facility costs in order to properly reflect the full cost of Library services.

BACKGROUND

At the December 7, 2023 Library Board meeting, the following motion was passed by the Library Board:

THAT LIB 21-2023 Transferring Remaining Library Operational Funds to Reserve report be received; and

THAT the Library Board request the Town to place any surplus Library operating funds into the Library's reserve account at the end of each operating year.

To provide some background, the Library is considered a "local board" within the *Municipal Act* and are governed by the *Public Libraries Act*. The Library is under the management and control of the "Board". The Library Board is appointed by the Municipal Council.

From a finance perspective, the Library is treated as a department of the Town – all financial transactions are administered by the Finance department and HR/payroll functions are administered by the HR department; however the Library CEO is the Library Treasurer. Each year, the Library Board presents their budget request to Council and Council deliberates and approves the annual budget and tax levy requirement. At year end, accounts are reconciled, and any surplus is placed in the Town's working capital reserve and any deficit is funded from the Town's working capital reserve. The building is owned by the Town and managed/funded by the Town's Facilities department.

REPORT

In order to consider this request, the first question is: what is the legislative requirement related to Library operating surplus/deficits? Both the *Municipal Act* and *Public Libraries Act* are silent on this subject. There are municipalities within Ontario that keep the Library funds separate, including surplus/deficits, and there are those similar to St. Marys that incorporate the surplus/deficits within the general municipal reserves. As such, the ability for the Library to manage their own surplus/deficit funds is an option left up to the municipality to decide.

Within the Town of St. Marys, the Water, Wastewater, Solid Waste, and Building departments operate in this fashion as they are all 100% rate-funded. This ensures that these operations are funded 100% by user rates charged, all of which are under the complete control of the Town Council. For the Building department, this includes only the activities related to building permits. It is legislated within the *Building Code Act* that building permit fees must be used for building permit activities only – as such a separate reserve is administered for annual surplus/deficits to meet this requirement.

The Town and the Library Board have a Memorandum of Understanding which outlines various services and supports provided between the Town and the Library. It also is silent in relation to the allocation of surplus/deficits from Library operations. This item was considered in 2017, but ultimately was not approved by the Library Board of the day.

Library Board's position:

The Library Board would like to suggest to Council that allowing surplus operational funds not spent in the allotted year could be placed in a reserve account and then used for any unexpected or long-term projects. This could be a useful tool in the next five years as the Library prepares for some future space allocations and their accompanying costs. However, this would not be seen as an intentional, yearly way to save funds. The items put forward in the annual operational budget would be intended to be spent within that calendar year. Funds in reserve would need the approval of the Library Board to be spent. Additional checks and balances could be put in place to ensure the Library's spending aligns with Town operations, strategic objectives and overall corporate efficiencies.

General Pros for Library Board retaining annual surplus/deficits:

- Financial autonomy for the Library Board
- Allows Library to implement strategic planning using built up reserve funds
- Financial autonomy should lead to more accountability and efficient use of funds
- Library would be able to fund one-time expenditures from this reserve rather than requesting an annual budget increase from the Town

General Cons for Library Board retaining annual surplus/deficits:

- Increased risk to the Library when unexpected expenditures or revenue losses arise
- Town may still be required to assist with large, unexpected expenditures or deficits
- Library being more autonomous may lead to being more siloed from Town operations
- Full cost accounting should be implemented to ensure full cost of Library services is captured within annual budget
- Could lead to Library considering alternative service arrangements reducing overall corporate efficiencies or other strategic objectives
- More financial autonomy may require the Library to consider having their own finance expertise/resources

If the Town and Library Board want to move forward with this concept, there are many options or policy decisions that can be created to eliminate any concerns or reduce any risk from either side. If the Strategic Priorities Committee wants to consider this request, the next step would be to provide staff with general guidance on the following questions below. After that, Town staff would work with Library staff and the Board to develop a policy to meet the guidance received, with a final framework to be brought forward at a future Council meeting for consideration:

- Would the Library Board have full care and control over the reserve?
- Are there restrictions that would need to be in place for use of Library reserve?
 - No restrictions
 - Dollar amount threshold to be approved by Town Council
 - No capital purchases
- Would Council want to implement any maximums on the surplus/deficit transferred to/from the reserve? – this may minimize the risk for both parties
 - For example say \$10,000 or 5% of tax levy – if the surplus was \$15,000, \$10,000 would flow to Library reserve, \$5,000 would flow to the Town's general working capital reserve. In the case of a deficit, the inverse would occur. The limit shown here is just an example and can be set based on any factors determined.
- Would this policy be effective for the year ending 2023 or 2024
 - Using 2023 would provide the Library with an initial reserve transfer, as the unaudited Library surplus for 2023 is estimated at \$54,000

Another item, regardless of the decision on the Library's annual surplus/deficit, is the proper accounting and/or cost of providing Library services in St. Marys. This topic often comes up and staff are seeking direction to adjust the accounting approach to reflect a better representation of the net cost of the Library within the Library's annual budget. To do so, the following two adjustments are recommended:

- Facility rental charge for the use of the facility that matches the annual budgeted costs to operate the facility and should include lifecycle costs of the building as the Town's asset management plan evolves to include this.
- An administrative charge from the Town – The administrative charge should be calculated based on the same methodology that is being currently developed by the Town, City of Stratford, and County of Perth in relation to the shared services agreements.

Both of these adjustments would not have an impact on the overall tax levy but would lead to an increase in the Library levy and a corresponding decrease in some of the Town department tax levies. This approach would result in a more transparent Library budget that is reflective of the true cost of operations.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Potential financial implications are discussed above.

The current Library reserve includes a balance of \$166,956.56. This reserve is made up of the following:

Adult Learning	\$28,213.64	Used to balance the March 31 st year end, has accumulated over time
PCIN	\$21,361.00	Held for ILS and Van for PCIN
Library	\$117,381.92	Previous years (2007 – 2023) deferred grant and donation revenue, and surplus for capital

		book purchases when it was previously accounted for as through capital transfers (now runs through operating budget)
Total	\$166,956.56	

The last 2 years of Library surpluses are summarized below:

Year	Revenue	Expenditures	Net	Comments
2022 Budget	\$86,650	\$630,583	\$543,933	
2022 Actuals	\$138,855	\$615,105	\$476,550	
Difference	\$52,205	\$15,478	\$67,383	Surplus - \$10k grant booked in 2022 but should be 2023, Donations over by \$33,000 (\$21,000 transferred to reserve), \$5k from DCs, \$35,500 under in salaries and benefits, contracted services under by \$8k.
2023 Budget	\$101,232	\$658,192	\$556,960	
2023 Actuals (Unaudited)	\$121,595	\$624,462	\$502,867	
Difference	\$20,363	\$33,730	\$54,093	Surplus - \$10k lower on grants due to 2022 accounting, Donations over by \$17k, \$5k DC transfer, user fees up by \$6,500, Salaries and benefits under by \$27,000, contracted services under by \$7k.

SUMMARY

Currently the St. Marys Library, while a separate local board, is treated like a Town department from a financial perspective. At the end of the year, any surplus is returned to the Town reserves and any deficit is funded by the Town working capital reserve. Capital is all funded by the Town's capital reserves (except for Library collection which was moved to the operating budget a few years ago) and the facility is owned and managed by the Town. The Library Board has requested Council consider authorizing the Library to retain any surplus funds in their own reserve to begin to build a potential reserve to fund future unexpected expenditures or special projects. This report speaks to the pros and cons; the Strategic Priorities Committee will discuss this request prior to making a recommendation to Council.

STRATEGIC PLAN

☒ Not applicable to this report.

OTHERS CONSULTED

Sarah Andrews, Library CEO

Denise Feeney, Finance Manager

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	COR 20-2024 Library Surplus.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Apr 9, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Brent Kittmer

FORMAL REPORT

To:	Chair Stratthdee and Members of Strategic Priorities Committee
Prepared by:	Stephanie Ische, Director of Community Services
Date of Meeting:	16 April 2024
Subject:	DCS 17-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning

PURPOSE

During Council's priority setting session in 2023, the following was set as a top priority for the term:

- **Strategic Priority:** Strategic Vision – Quarry
 - **Tactic(s):**
 - Developing a strategic vision on how best to leverage the space at the facility to add new amenities.
 - Reviewing the opportunity to expand the facility's operating season in an effort to attract the class trip market.

This report is presented for the Strategic Priorities Committee to discuss options to expand services at the Quarry.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT DCS 17-2024 Quarry Strategic Planning report be received as information.

BACKGROUND

The St. Marys swimming Quarry is a popular destination that draws visitors from all over. The Lind Sportsplex, surrounding green areas, fishing Quarry, and other features increase the potential of this site. Shuffleboard is played in the Lind Sportsplex building's downstairs/dry pad, facilitated by the Friendship Centre. Due to parking supply issues, this activity is conducted outside of the swimming attraction's regular operating hours.

Super Splash Inflatable Waterpark and the Town of St. Marys entered into an agreement in 2020 regarding the operation of the inflatable waterpark at this site. The original agreement has changed slightly and since then, a few modifications have been made to guarantee customers' flawless experience. The partnership also includes a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that permits the lifeguards to work jointly to supervise the swimming Quarry and inflatable waterpark. This change has worked exceptionally well and has allowed for a seamless service. The lifeguard team trains together on all features offered at the Quarry location.

The swimming Quarry has always experienced a lot of foot traffic, but when Super Splash Inflatable Waterpark launched, the number of visitors increased even further. In addition to Super Splash Inflatable waterpark, staff have continued to add new items to the swimming Quarry to improve existing services over the last two summers. This includes:

- An expanded parking lot (while this has helped with the volume it is still not sufficient to meet the current demands)
- Cross walk
- Partnerships with local businesses for food options (i.e., pizza sales in the canteen)
- Continued partnership with the Friendship Centre operating the summer shuffleboard program out of this location.
- Installed a visual wall wrap in a prominent area highlighting the beauty of the Downtown and included the website for more information.
- Added a brochure rack to the main entry and ensured it was stocked throughout the season.
- Added poster frames to the back of each bathroom stall door and inserted posters advertising events, dining, and shopping.
- Social media – added reels to the Town’s Instagram page and posted about the swimming Quarry throughout the season.
- Advertised in the summer fun guide, festival guide, explore Ontario and utilized one influencer to promote the swimming Quarry.

REPORT

Recreation offers a multitude of pathways to well-being for individuals, communities, and our built and natural environments. This location is not only a benefit to us individually but also contributes to the overall well-being of the community. From connecting people to nature, physical fitness to joy and fulfillment as participating in leisure pursuits brings joy and a sense of accomplishment contributing to a more enriched life.

Current and Future Vision of the Swimming Quarry

Although the swimming Quarry practically sells itself through word-of-mouth, it's still vital to review this service on a regular basis and perhaps consider additional activities for visitors to enjoy while in the community. Staff regularly assess the business, and given the current potential, the following will be added this summer:

- The Recreation team will host recreation summer camps upstairs with programming in the water. These camps are currently filled at approximately 60% capacity. They will be half-day programs with specific special-interest themes. The themes include Mindfulness, Cooking, and Sports. The Camp PRC team is excited to collaborate with local service providers to enhance the programming of these special offerings.
- Rental opportunities in the upstairs Lind Sportsplex for rentals for family gatherings.
- Partnership with Tourism London to offer the Ontario Summer games triathlon.
- Trial run Tourism kiosk program.
- More influencer promotions.
- Looking to invest in moving images to add more digital promotions and utilizing drone photography to show live excitement in the swimming Quarry and on the inflatable waterpark.
- Partnership with the local BIA

One potential change that Council had asked staff to consider was to expand the operating season, and to open earlier to make the swimming Quarry an attractive destination for school trips. This was discussed with the Recreation and Leisure Advisory Committee. Staff learned that this is not a likely

source of increased business as school boards deem swim trips to be too much liability and are not booking these types of trips. As a result, staff have not pursued this idea further.

In addition to the above, the team is also still concentrating on longer-term opportunities for the summer of 2025 and beyond. At this point staff are simply investigating and brainstorming a few possibilities. Examples include:

- Opportunities for recreational programming on the dry pad at Lind Sportsplex. Apart from the Shuffleboard programs, this is a service that has not yet been utilized. Still, this vacant area might provide a great venue for events aimed at attracting quarry patrons. Laser tag is one type of activity that could be held here. The participant would have to pay for this service, which is offered by the recreation team.
- Expansion of the recreation summer camps. As this is an extremely popular activity that sells out quickly this is something that staff will explore expanding in the future.
- A Treetop Adventure above the swimming Quarry - the potential benefits of a business like this makes this a venture worth exploring. Imagine a thrilling treetop adventure nestled just above the swimming Quarry. This exciting program could extend its season beyond the Quarry operations, starting in May and continuing until the end of October. After discussions with a treetop company, it is estimated that development costs could reach \$800,000. However, staff believes that this unique attraction would further enhance the location's appeal. Exploring grant opportunities for future program development is an exciting possibility. This recreational tourism endeavor holds promise, although it necessitates meticulous planning and execution.
- Opportunities for stand-up paddleboards and kayaking (this could include lessons or rentals)

Future Potential of Fishing Quarry

The Town has made significant investments in the Water St. S area. Examples include the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum partnership, the swimming Quarry, the Lind Sportsplex, improvements to the racket sports courts and conversion of the Grand Trunk rail line into the Riverview Walkway. One area that has not be touched significantly over the years is the limestone quarry between Water St. S and the Riverview walkway, now referred to as the fishing Quarry.

The fishing Quarry, like the swimming quarry, was a previous industrial site, a source of crushed limestone which was exported by rail. Today the area is fenced with 3 defined openings for fishing access, the access paths are not AODA accessible and as such warning signage is displayed at the entrances.

As the area was previously an industrialised site, without significant upgrades, many remnants of the previous industrial use remain today. Legacy concrete supports and footings are visible and are accessible via internal "goat paths". Many of these legacy concrete structures are used as impromptu swim platforms as they are accessible via goat path trails that been cut through the brush. In addition, metal / iron cables and material are visible adjacent to the access paths. Swimming is restricted by by-law as rescue access is problematic at best, and no sonar survey of the water has been completed to identify unseen dangers.

Overall, usage is minimal and could be summarized into a small amount fishing and illegal swimming in the peak summer months. Staff have been advised the fishing Quarry is not large enough to support significant fish populations without an external food supply and support.

To understand the logistics of this location and its future potential to contribute to the attractions of Water St. S., staff members have contacted the Town's insurance provider. The conversation's summary is as follows:

- There have been no insurance claims related to the area in the last 10 years, so the space is not significantly impacting premiums as it currently sits.

- The Town is and has been passively managing the space for many years. Due to the features of the site and human nature, the site is considered an “attractive nuisance” where managing trespassing is difficult. This trespassing presents a risk to the Town through occupiers’ liability as the Town is aware of the nature of hazards that exist.

Under the Occupiers Liability Act, a municipality has a duty of care as the occupier of a premise. Section 3(1) states that an occupier “...owes a duty to take such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that persons entering on the premises, and the property brought on the premises by those persons are reasonably safe while on the premises”. Municipalities need to take care and mitigate the risk of exposure to liability claims. Proper inspection, maintenance and record keeping can help minimize liability.

Considering the Occupiers’ Liability Act, and the current conditions of the space, “passively managing” this property would not be a viable defence for the Town in the event of a claim.

- Ideally, considering the risk associated with the site due to its former use and potential risks from not being cleaned up along with the Town inviting people to use portions of the site, the Town should either be more purposeful with restricting access and preventing trespassing, or clean the site up such that the potential hazards from its former use are no longer prevalent and the site itself is no longer an attractive nuisance.

Staff also note that the boundary fence has entered a point of disrepair, it cannot be significantly fixed as it is continually cut / vandalized to gain access to better fishing or swimming spots, this is localized to the fence adjacent to the Riverview walkway. Public Works has been actively patching but is reluctant to spend significant capital on replacement as the vandalism is likely to remain ongoing.

Looking Forward

People travel from all around to visit the St. Marys swimming Quarry because it is regarded as a sports tourism destination. A successful sports tourism expansion requires collaboration, community engagement, and a long-term vision.

While staff have already made improvements to the swimming Quarry, there’s still untapped potential, especially for the fishing Quarry. To make this location even more appealing, staff has been actively exploring additional amenities and discussed modifications that could take place. They’ve conducted research and engaged with various businesses to consider exciting new additions.

As previously mentioned, the swimming Quarry is a busy location with a large volume of participants. Staff believe there is much potential that needs to be explored. Staff put before the Strategic Priorities Committee a few questions to consider and explore as it relates to creating a strategic vision for the fishing Quarry. It is important to note that staff view the list below as an “a la carte” approach, meaning that nothing is necessarily mutually exclusive. Council has the ability to choose a number of options to help build their vision for the area.

Discussion 1 – Status Quo – Quarry operations to remain as they are today with no further service expansions

An option exists where the space and service level may remain exactly as it is, and staff will carry on providing the services in the same manner. The question to consider is whether the Council is satisfied with the current service profile of the site, thus preferring no further expansion.

This option is being placed before the Strategic Priorities Committee as there has been feedback from the public, especially through the launch of the Super Splash Waterpark, that the Quarry should remain as it has historically been. Given this public sentiment staff wanted to give the Strategic Priorities Committee the opportunity to discuss if this should be the future direction of the site. There would be no costs to this option.

The alternative would be to give staff direction that the Town should consider how to maximize the recreational tourism potential of the swimming Quarry location. This would involve staff moving forward to further explore some of the future ideas charted out above, and then to implement them as the opportunity arises.

This contrasting discussion is an important starting point for the Strategic Priorities Committee as direction to staff to either remain status quo or further expand the offerings of the swimming Quarry will drive next steps for this amenity.

Discussion 2 – Should the Town consider more of a groomed look around both quarries, particularly the fishing one?

With this option there would be no additional amenities added however there would be work put towards a focus on a groomed appearance for both locations. This could include the cleaning up of brush within the fishing quarry and the removal of the fence on the trail side. Making this area appealing to visit and fish. Given the comments from the Town's insurer, it is staff's recommendation that some work will need to be completed in the short term to reduce liabilities that exist at the fishing quarry.

If this approach fits with Council's vision for the area, capital funds for 2025 could be included to create a landscape design plan to largely address the hidden hazards. It should be noted that the successes realized in the swimming Quarry are built on previous capital investments of the Town.

Discussion 3- Should the Town consider offering another service in the fishing Quarry?

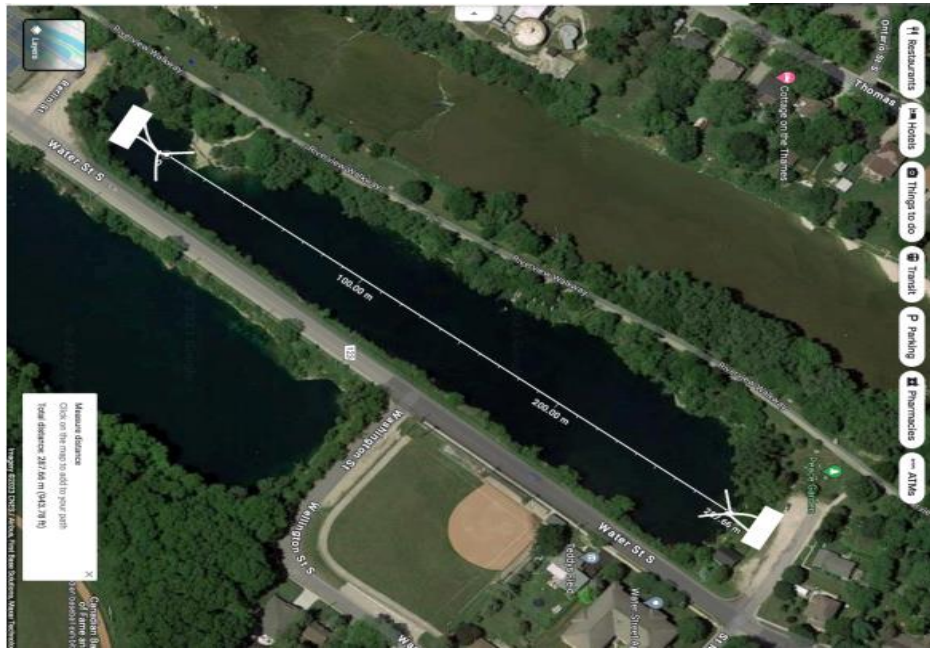
Staff view the location as a blank canvas, and if the Strategic Priorities Committee so desired, there are numerous activities that could be added. With this option it would also include cleaning up the fishing Quarry with a focus on the groomed appearance as well. A few of the concepts that staff members have investigated thus far are outlined below for the Committee's consideration. Both activities below, which would involve a documented agreement and a space lease with a business, would function similarly to Super Splash Waterpark Inflatable.

1) Wake Park

Staff have been approached by a company to operate this out of the fishing Quarry. This company currently operate a similar park in Sarnia called Boarder Pass.

Wakeboarding is a water sport in which a rider, standing on a wakeboard, is pulled along a motorized cable system. Due to the surface area of a wakeboard, this is the easiest version of 'waterskiing' and can be taught at very slow and safe speeds. This system is very quiet with almost no noise running at 55 decibels, less than a human voice.

This option would take the full length of the fishing Quarry giving the rider a longer distance to wakeboard. Below is a picture of where the equipment would be located. The cable system will run the entire length of the quarry with structures to hold it at each end. The electrical equipment would need to be housed in a facility (i.e. St. Maria pumphouse) to deter vandalism. Additional work would need to be completed at the north end of the quarry to allow wakeboarders access to a platform/dock area to begin their activity.



Pros:

- There is no wakeboarding around the location and staff feel this could be an additional draw to the site allowing visitors to opt into additional activities.
- There is no sound that is emitted from the motor and this activity is environmentally friendly with no risk of oil or fuel spillage.
- This facility would open in the spring and close in the fall, providing it with a longer duration of operation than the swimming Quarry.
- Because this is an incredibly unique activity a wakeboarding facility can draw tourists and visitors.
- Youth engagement – Wakeboarding can be part of youth recreation programs that encourage active lifestyles and a positive outlet.

Cons:

- Aesthetics - The structure that needs to be installed may be obtrusive to the location. The structure will run along the quarry, however at each end where the 'x's' are in the picture above there will be an 8 - 12-meter structure above the water's surface. This is how riders are pulled along with a variable speed electric motor capable of maintaining 40 km/hour. Wakeboard ramps and buoys alter the visual landscape.
- This structure and activity could be interfering with individuals wishing to fish, essentially ending this activity which has historically taken place.
- The electronics for this option would need to be held in a facility so consideration would need to be given to utilize St. Maria pump house for this. If this is the selected option, the Town would enter into a lease agreement like Super Splash Waterpark which would include a part of St. Maria pump house usage.

2) Scuba Diving partnership

Questions about scuba diving opportunities at the Quarry are frequently posed to staff. Because of liability concerns, the Town has not permitted this activity in the past. Despite this, there may be a chance for a company to offer this service out of the fishing Quarry because it is an ideal scuba location for training purposes. This is not a new concept as quarries are often used for scuba for their unique

features. Three successful scuba quarries in Ontario include, Sherkston Quarry just located outside of Port Colborne, Innerkip Quarry and Kirkfield Quarry.

If this was the selected option a scuba diving business could operate out of this area. This alternative would involve seeking out a partner to rent the fishing Quarry for scuba diving, training, etc.

Pros:

- This activity is a quiet activity and would not be disruptive to residents fishing or surrounding patrons.
- Training ground – Quarries are commonly used for scuba training. They provide a controlled environment for beginners to learn essential skills, such as buoyancy control, mask cleaning and emergency procedures.
- This could encourage local participation in scuba diving that would venture out to other dive in other locations.
- Snorkeling could be added as an additional feature.
- The scuba club would also be able to partner with the Town's indoor pool to utilize it for training and certification year-round.

Cons:

- Environmental impact – diving activities can disturb aquatic ecosystems. Community members may express concerns about disturbing wildlife, altering habitats, or introducing invasive species.
- Depth limitations – The Quarry is not very deep so may not be as appealing to advanced divers.
- Limited Marine Life – Unlike ocean or lake dives a quarry often lacks diverse marine life.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Discussion 1 – Status Quo – No cost

Discussion 2 – Cleaning up of the Quarries – There would be costs associated with staff time, signage for safety along with ongoing maintenance.

Discussion 3 – Partnership with a business to operate a service – There would be costs associated with staff time, signage for safety along with ongoing maintenance to keep things groomed. However, with this option there is revenue associated with it and the town would receive payment to lease the property to a business.

SUMMARY

Based on attendance history of the swimming Quarry, this location has grown and has become a popular destination and put the Town on the map. The partnership with Super Splash Inflatable Waterpark has exceeded expectations and staff believe additional enhancements at the swimming and fishing quarries will further meet Council's goals by fulfilling several initiatives within Council's Tourism Strategy.

STRATEGIC PLAN

☒ Within the St. Marys Culture & Tourism Strategy the following priorities, outcomes, and tactics support the following initiatives in the Plan.

- Pillar #1 Infrastructure
 - Partner with the Community Services Department and Public Works Department to move forward initiatives that overlap between the Culture & Tourism Strategy and the Recreation and Leisure Master Plan.

- Pillar # 3 Tourism
 - Strengthen the local economy, with a focus on businesses that can cater to tourism.
 - Leverage the local culinary, heritage, recreation and agriculture sectors as a key differentiator and driver for tourism visits.
- Pillar # 4 Enhance Cultural Offerings
 - Opportunities for visitors to interact with St. Marys residents should be encouraged.

OTHERS CONSULTED

Andrea Slade, Aquatics Manager

Kelly Deeks-Johnson, Tourism and Economic Development Manager

Jed Kelly, Director of Public Works

Jeff Wolfe, Infrastructure Services Manager

Joannah Campbell, Recreation Manager

Doug La Pointe, Recreation Operations Manager

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	DCS 17-2024 Quarry Planning.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	Apr 9, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Brent Kittmer