

Engage communities and activate local solutions to sustain a healthy Lake Huron Forever.

## Lake Huron Forever Pledge

Situated on the stunning shores of Lake Huron, the Town of Goderich is a vibrant hub of ecological and community treasures, cherished by dedicated residents and thousands of visitors each year. This magnificent lake is not just a backdrop for the many residents that live here; it provides essential economic and recreational opportunities that sustain the Goderich community's wellbeing.

The Port of Goderich, owned by the municipality and managed by the Goderich Port Management Corporation, stands as the only deep-water port on the eastern shore of Lake Huron. This pivotal hub of commercial shipping in southwestern Ontario, supports the thriving regional mining, manufacturing, and agricultural industries. Each year, approximately 250 vessels make their call at this notable port, transporting vital commodities like salt, grain, calcium chloride and aggregate for high friction asphalt applications. Beyond its commercial significance, the port also welcomes fishing boats and other maritime endeavors.

The Town's mission, "to provide sustainable services, be environmental leaders and to promote and maintain an exceptional quality of life," reflects the municipality's unwavering commitment to preserving our cherished environment. As the first Canadian municipality to embrace the Lake Huron Forever Pledge, the Town of Goderich reaffirms its dedication to protecting Lake Huron's invaluable ecosystem. This includes working closely with Bay City, MI, our sister city and fellow pledge signer, to develop cross-border initiatives that enhance the lake's health and resilience

Many communities along Lake Huron look to the Town of Goderich as environmental leaders and recognize our consistent efforts to preserve Lake Huron and the various ecosystems the Lake supports, including its diverse wildlife and globally unique species. Together, we must ensure that Lake Huron is conserved not only for our enjoyment but for future generations who will depend on its thriving ecosystem.

The Town's community well-being and economic prosperity are tied to Lake Huron. We understand that access to healthy natural resources like fresh air, clean water and public land improves the health and wellness of our entire community.

The municipality understands that we must work together to protect the shoreline, forests, and waterways to address threats of pollution and flooding caused by stormwater, proactively plan for the impacts of a changing climate, support native plant restoration and provide corridors for wildlife.

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The Town of Goderich is committed to understanding the unique connections our residents and visitors have to Goderich, and to incorporate their priorities and concerns into municipal decision making as we continue to lead natural resource protection efforts in our region. We pledge to protect Lake Huron forever.

#### **Our Lake Huron Forever Pledge**

- We hereby pledge to create, implement and update a Lake Huron Forever Community Road Map.
- We promise to serve as an example of how to proactively protect Lake Huron by sharing our work with other Lake Huron communities.
- We will allocate resources (time, money, people) to understanding emerging needs and opportunities to protect Lake Huron forever.
- We will commit to and encourage all community organizations and residents to take their own actions to protect Lake Huron, forever.
- We will give back to Lake Huron by examining management practices across municipal departments to identify ways to improve efforts to protect land and water resources.
- We will share our pledge with neighboring community leaders, as well as state, provincial and federal representatives to generate more conversation and positive action for Lake Huron and Lake Huron communities.

#### **Our Lake Huron Forever Community Road Map**

The Town of Goderich has recognized specific environmental challenges that pose direct threats to the ecological health of Lake Huron, its shoreline, bluffs, and its distinctive port. In collaboration with the Lake Huron Forever network of partners, Goderich is committed to addressing these challenges through clearly defined goals and strategic action steps. Furthermore, the municipality consistently endeavors to acknowledge and integrate environmental protection within its long-term policies and plans, some of which include the Town of Goderich Official Plan, Asset Management Policy and Conservation and Demand Management (CDM) Plan.

The municipality aims to increase our efforts to collaborate with environmental organizations and agencies, civic organizations, youth groups, visitors and the general public to elevate the protection and care of our natural resources. Public education and engagement will be incorporated into municipal planning and priorities.

To best serve the community, the Town of Goderich supports a strategic and pragmatic approach to delivering economic, environmental and social programs to ensure the long-term sustainability of

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our efforts. We understand that current and future programs need to be within our capacity to sustain.

### **Our Lake Huron Forever Goals**

#### **BLUFF EROSION AND WATERFRONT:**

- Develop educational material regarding erosion control on bluffs with community partners and distribute to landowners living within the Town of Goderich boundary
- Develop a Coastal Environmental Plan

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS:**

- Integrate climate change mitigation and adaptation into infrastructure planning
- Investigate greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction programs for residential, commercial and industrial sectors provided by local utility companies
- Promote active transportation practices and infrastructure

#### **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT:**

- Develop educational materials regarding potential lake contamination via stormwater runoff
- When feasible, collaborate with the Lake Huron Coastal Centre to deploy litter traps aimed at reducing microplastics infiltration into the water system
- Explore nature-based solutions to stormwater runoff

#### **WASTE REDUCTION:**

- Explore additional strategies for the municipality to enhance waste diversion efforts
- Research and develop educational materials and campaigns to promote overall waste reduction, partnering with community organizations to leverage various public marketing strategies

#### **WATER CONSERVATION:**

- Invest in modernizing water infrastructure to reduce waste, support water recycling technologies and enforce usage regulations especially during peak times or droughts
- Implement strategies to promote usage of water-efficient appliances and provide incentives for sustainable practices like rainwater harvesting, alongside policies promoting efficient landscaping

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**GREENING GODERICH:**

- Investigate and develop educational materials to promote the planting of native trees and plants on private property, while integrating more natural habitats within the Town of Goderich
- Incorporate green infrastructure in current and future planning and development
- Provide education to seasonal staff that manage shoreline vegetation on invasive and native species identification
- Develop an inventory of Town-owned tree infrastructure
- Promote sustainable guidelines for festivals and events in Goderich

**EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS:**

- Institute partnership and collaboration to support all Lake Huron Forever initiatives
- Persist in reaching the milestones set by the FCM/ICLEI's Partners in Climate Protection (PCP) Program, which includes creating a comprehensive Corporate and Community Climate Plan
- Explore partnerships with conservation groups and trail networks
- Support youth environmental education
- Consider philanthropic opportunities, in collaboration with local Community Foundations, to welcome community support, donations and legacy giving towards building endowments and associated granting to further Lake Huron Forever pledge initiatives

**Our Action Steps To Reach These Goals**

**BLUFF EROSION AND WATERFRONT:**

1. Control phragmites growth through partnership with Ausable-Bayfield Conservation Authority
2. Review and enhance maintenance plans and partnerships at the Goderich waterfront
3. Continue to explore opportunities to provide accessible spaces for recreational activity at the Goderich waterfront, as well as municipal parks and greenspaces
4. Develop a Coastal Environmental Plan with the Town's Engineer

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS:**

5. Develop a Corporate and Community Climate Plan, a requirement of FCM/ICLEI's PCP program
6. Review and update the Corporate Climate Change Declaration, as well as the Lake Huron Forever Pledge, when onboarding new Council officials
7. Execute energy conservation measures from the Goderich GHG Reduction Pathway Feasibility Studies at the Maitland Recreation Centre and Wastewater Treatment Plant to reduce GHG emissions by 50% in ten years and 80% in twenty years

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8. Encourage electric vehicle (EV) usage within the municipality and uphold the Asset Management Policy by evaluating electric and alternative fuel sources for fleet and equipment replacements to ensure cost-effective lifecycle management

**WASTE REDUCTION:**

9. Refine municipal waste management strategies and continue promoting waste diversion activities, like improving waterfront recycling and reviewing acceptable organics in the curbside program after contract completion.

**WATER CONSERVATION:**

10. Utilize nature-based solutions for safe-guarding coastline and water quality, while considering the community's maintenance requirements and aesthetic preferences
11. Promote public use of water filling stations and explore other opportunities to assist in reducing single-use plastic consumption

**GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT:**

12. Continue annual tree planting initiatives for public participation through Maitland Valley Conservation Authority's Stewardship Services
13. Incorporate green infrastructure and nature-based solutions, such as innovative stormwater management options, to enhance environmental sustainability during capital construction projects across the municipality
14. Continue employing environmentally friendly vinegar for weed treatment in Goderich's flower beds and greenspaces
15. Evaluate and update current zoning practices to include low-impact development and green infrastructure

**GODERICH POLICIES AND PLANS:**

16. Implement and update the municipal Energy Conservation Strategy and the Town of Goderich Conservation Demand Management (CDM) Plan by converting municipal facilities to LED lighting and performing building retrofits for improved energy efficiency
17. Maintain Green Marine certification at the Port of Goderich
18. Integrate Lake Huron Forever Pledge goals in development of relevant municipal plans, such as the Corporate and Community Climate Action Plan and CDM Plan

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**EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND FUNDING:**

19. When feasibly possible, support various partnership initiatives offered by the Lake Huron Coastal Centre, such as the Coastal Conservation Youth Corps, beach clean-up efforts and stormwater protection practices (e.g., litter traps)
20. Increase invasive species awareness for both Town staff and property owners by supporting invasive species training programs and other education opportunities
21. Institute and maintain partnerships with regional Community Foundations
22. Collaborate on environmental initiatives with Bay City, MI, focusing on joint programs, monitoring, and public awareness to enhance the health and resilience of Lake Huron
23. Engage with current and future Lake Huron Forever communities through peer-learning opportunities and other regular meetings of city officials, staff and leadership
24. Continue to provide support to the Maitland Trail Association for maintenance of the Maitland Wood, Menesetung Trail and Millenium Trail, when possible
25. Monitor grants related to energy efficiency, environmental sustainability, tree planting, and active transportation to support municipal projects.
26. Tell the Lake Huron Forever story via various media outlets and update the Town's webpage to highlight local efforts to protect Lake Huron and local quality of life
27. With assistance from Lake Huron Forever partners, Goderich will install visual representation(s) highlighting the pledge to become a Lake Huron Forever community
28. The Town of Goderich will consider and discuss opportunities to raise or allocate funding for Lake Huron Forever programming and projects, including considering these goals for grant applications and as line items within the municipal budget

*Signature*

*Date*

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Trevor Bazinet, Mayor,  
Town of Goderich

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Andrea Fisher, Director of Legislative Services/Clerk  
Town of Goderich