

THUNDER BAY CHARITY CASINO, CANADA



Owner: Ontario Casino Corporation

Architect: Moriyama & Teshima

Retail Consultants: Talbot Consultants International Inc.

Value: \$28.0 Million

**CHARITY CASINO, KESKUS HARBOUR MALL & EATON'S PROPERTY,
THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO**

The Keskus Harbour Mall and Eaton's Properties were key components of the North Core central business district of Thunder Bay. The Eaton's property had been vacant since the T. Eaton Company's decision to close its Thunder Bay store in September of 1997. This closure, together with other retail changes in the North Core, and Thunder Bay as a whole, lead to a very high vacancy rate in the Keskus Harbour Mall. There were therefore serious questions over the viability of the Keskus Harbour Mall property if its current use continued. As a result we were retained by The City of Thunder Bay (as a pre-emptive strategy) to identify feasible alternative uses for these buildings and set out the means by which the preferred of these uses could be introduced. Several visits were made to the site and the trade area and interactive workshops were held with City officials and local property owners and retailers. Our conclusion was that, although the key street level frontages of the Eaton's property were still viable for retail, the upper and lower floors of the Eaton's building and all levels of the entire shopping centre were no longer suitable for retail use. We therefore recommended that the shopping centre be "de-malled" with, ideally, 50% of it being converted into

a new "Thunder Bay Charity Casino" and the balance being demolished for casino parking and an urban park. As far as the Eaton's store was concerned we recommended that small retail units (suitable for local retailers offering goods and services synergistic with casinos) be "wrapped" around the Eaton's street frontages and that the balance of the building be converted into "The Thunder Bay Casino Hotel & Convention Centre". Once our recommendation had been accepted our final tasking was to provide a qualified "hit-list" of hotel and food & beverage operators and retailers and suggest suitable leasing and marketing materials. The sale of the Keskus Harbour Mall to the Ontario Casino Corporation was announced in August 1999 (one month after the completion of our study) and, shortly afterwards, the Eaton's store was optioned by a local developer for conversion to retail and casino hotel as recommended by us. This option was subsequently exercised and the sale closed in October 1999. Since then, as planned, the revitalisation of downtown Port Arthur has escalated with the return of successful retailers & restaurants to the downtown core.





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ONTARIO LOTTERY & GAMING CORPORATION

Talbot Consultants was retained by the Ontario Lottery Corporation to evaluate current and potential new locations based on current and potential best customer demographics, current customer draw and key site search.. Talbot Consultants reviewed the OLGC database and then integrated it with the latest proprietary demographic database, the latest proprietary mapping software and our own internal analytical software including our Neighbourhood Life Cycle™ demographic clustering system. We then conducted an analysis of OLGC's "best customer" demographics and then identified areas accordingly so as to assist OLGC in determining the optimum locations for Bingo Halls.

BIG LINK BINGO is a unique co-operative effort of OLGC, the Ontario Charitable Gaming Association, which distributes the charitable proceeds, and the province's commercial bingo operators. BIG LINK BINGO links participating bingo halls to OLGC's central computer system. BIG LINK BINGO proceeds help thousands of community charities and nonprofit organizations across Ontario through direct funding. To date over \$65.9 million has been distributed to community charities and non-profit organizations as a result of this collaborative effort.

