



# Great Lakes Waterfront Trail

Dave Meyer and Marlaine Koehler  
September 27, 2018  
Waterfront Regeneration Trust



# Legacy Vision

Protect, Connect, Celebrate and Regenerate Canada's Great Lakes

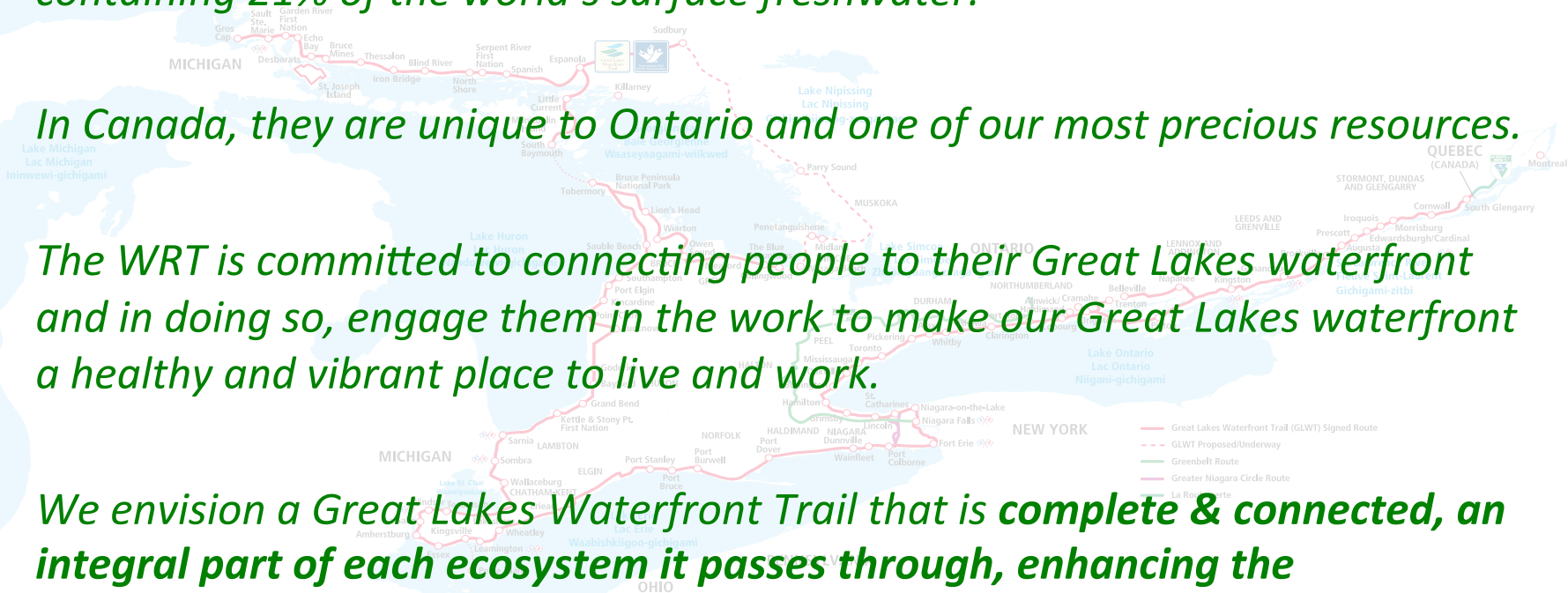
Dedicated route as close to the water's edge as ecologically feasible  
First step towards a regenerated waterfront

*The Great Lakes are the largest group of freshwater lakes on **earth**, containing 21% of the world's surface freshwater.*

*In Canada, they are unique to Ontario and one of our most precious resources.*

*The WRT is committed to connecting people to their Great Lakes waterfront and in doing so, engage them in the work to make our Great Lakes waterfront a healthy and vibrant place to live and work.*

*We envision a Great Lakes Waterfront Trail that is **complete & connected**, an integral part of each ecosystem it passes through, enhancing the environment, economy, society and history of every community that participates in the development and use of the Trail.*





# Waterfront Regeneration Trust

Protect, Connect, Celebrate and Regenerate Canada's Great Lakes

Great Lakes  
Waterfront Trail

- Co-ordinate a partnership of 140+ communities and First Nations to create a 3000 km Great Lakes Waterfront Trail
  - Continuous, consistently signed, marked and mapped, extensively promoted
  - Foundational piece of Ontario's Provincial cycle network,
  - Part of the Great Lakes Strategy, Ontario Trails Strategy
  - Host regional and plenary partners meetings to give partners an opportunity to learn and share from each other and set priorities for the Trail program
- Promote the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail as a **provincial** recreational, fitness and tourism asset of **national significance** and key part of a strategy to protect, connect and celebrate Canada's Great Lakes
  - Develop & host multi-community programs and events geared to promote the WHOLE Trail, eg. the Great Waterfront Trail Adventure
  - Promote the Trail and local cycling at trade shows and in print and social media
  - Develop and maintain excellent web-resources for trail users that promote Great Lakes Waterfront Trail communities
  - Develop on-line resources for partners to facilitate cross-promotions
  - Create a network of strategic promotional partners eg CAA, Velo Quebec, Swim, Drink, Fish Canada, Greenbelt Foundation, Metrolinx
- Leverage membership to attract additional resources and funding from foundations, corporations (CIBC, CAA, MEC, Ontario Parks), senior government for programs, signage, partnership activities, trail projects and expansions
  - Maintain an inventory of priority capital projects with local partners
- Represent Great Lakes Waterfront Trail interests to senior government → MOECC, MTO, MTCS, MMA, MHL and RTOs—make the case for senior government participation and funding

— Great Lakes Waterfront Trail (GLWT) Signed Route  
- - - GLWT Proposed/Underway  
— Véloroute Voyageur Cycling Route (VCR)  
- - - VCR Proposed/Underway  
— Greenbelt Route  
- - - La route verte





# Attracting Senior Government Investment



60 km of Provincial Highway improvements invested in  
Lake Huron North Channel expansion



Thousand Islands Parkway  
(Severn Township)





- 3000 km, signed route
- 140 communities and First Nations
- combination of trails and roads
- Signed connections to Greenbelt Route and 13 GO Transit stations

- 3 Great Lakes, 5 bi-national rivers
- 3 UNESCO Biospheres, 33 Provincial Parks, 700+ parks, beaches, conservation areas, 100s heritage attractions



17% dedicated  
paths

8%  
residential  
streets

75% secondary  
roads  
(9% Provincial HWY)



# Phase 1: SSM to Sudbury





## Scenic: Wilderness & Waterfront

- 12 Heritage Rivers
- 16 Beaches
- Natural Areas
- George Lake Wetlands
- Whitefish Island

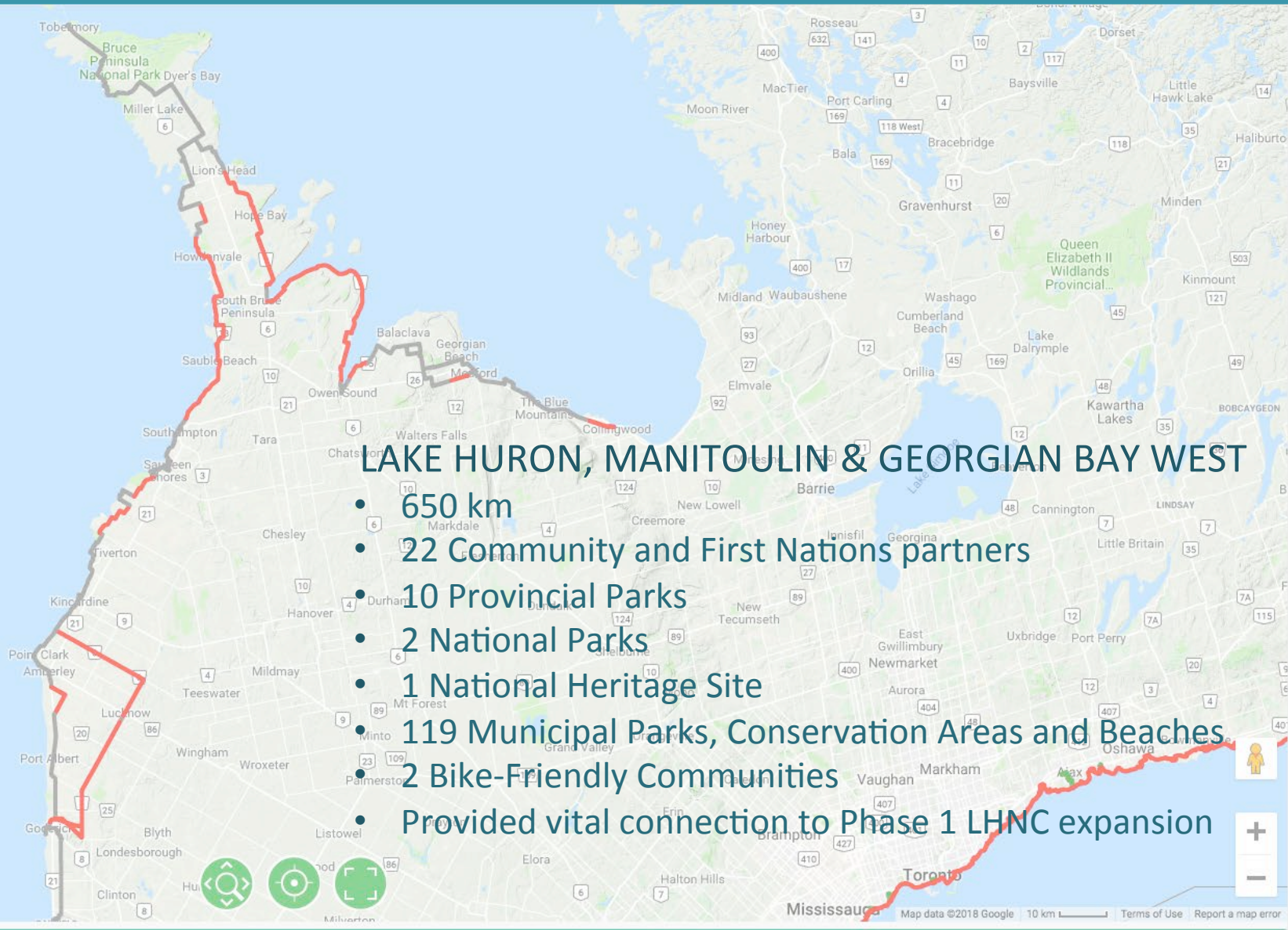


Chutes Provincial Park:  
Massey





# Phase 2: Huron to Manitoulin, Espanola & Collingwood



## LAKE HURON, MANITOULIN & GEORGIAN BAY WEST

- 650 km
- 22 Community and First Nations partners
- 10 Provincial Parks
- 2 National Parks
- 1 National Heritage Site
- 119 Municipal Parks, Conservation Areas and Beaches
- 2 Bike-Friendly Communities
- Provided vital connection to Phase 1 LHNC expansion



## Variety: Rural to Beachfront Boardwalks and Rugged Bluffs

- Ride the Sunrise and Sunset shores of the Bruce Peninsula
- Relaxing and Rugged: Gentle waterfront paths and the gravel of the Georgian Highlands
- Bruce Trail and Georgian Trail



View of Cedar Hill Park:  
Georgian Bluffs





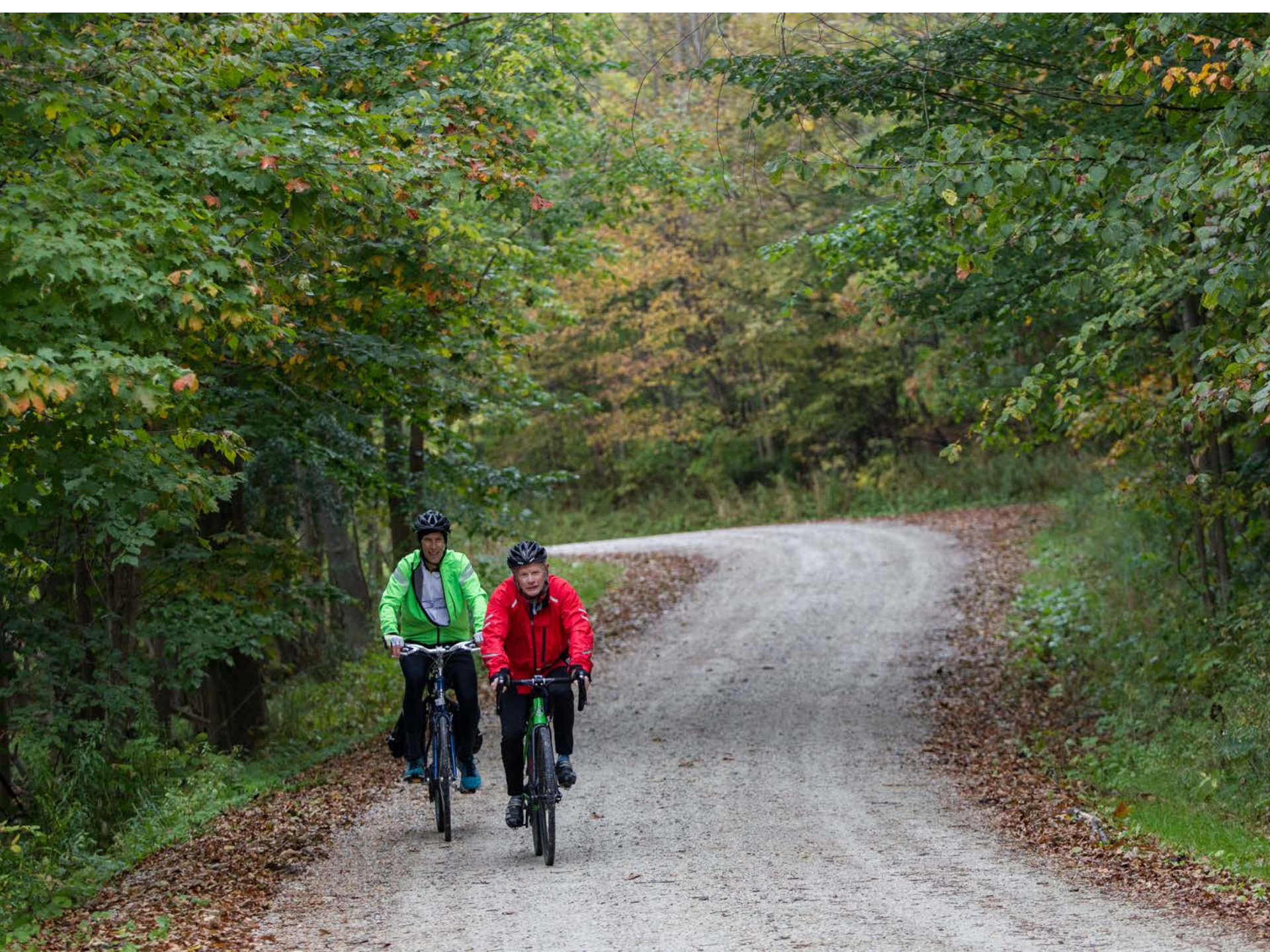














# Implementation Plan

## Funding from Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Approvals by March, 2019

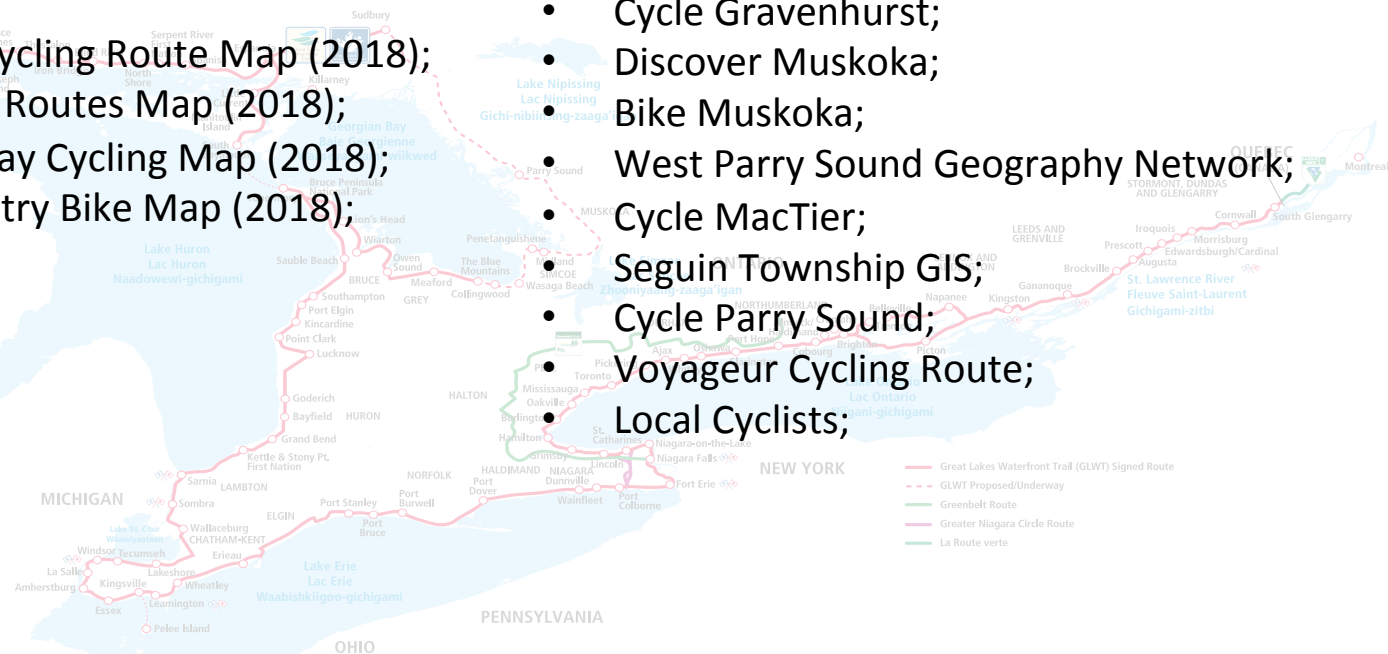
- ☐ Phase I
- ☐ **Establish route alignment in consultation with municipalities** September, 2018 – March, 2019
  - Built on the Provincial Cycling Network, locally promoted routes and existing infrastructure
  - Work with waterfront municipalities & tourism sector to determine route and the approvals process
  - **Secure approvals (council resolution) for route and partnership membership.**
  - Hold discussions with MTO re: sections requiring the use of Provincial highways
- ☐ **Map the Route** November, 2018 – August, 2019
  - Incorporate route into the WRT's on-line mapping (March-April, 2019)
  - Record attributes and alerts where appropriate, amenities, attractions and connections
  - Create detailed paper-based maps for the route
- ☐ Phase II
- ☐ **Mobile Workshop** May-June, 2019
  - Multi-day pilot tour of the route using existing route maps as sole navigation tool with the purpose to evaluate the route's market-readiness, discuss wayfinding, identify priorities for improvement and cross-promotions. Format involves presentations, round-table discussions, and cycling. For staff and volunteers.
  - Test the mapping as the sole navigational tool.
- ☐ **Wayfinding** August, 2019 – April, 2020
  - Pending Phase II of program funding, the WRT will supply the inaugural inventory of directional signage to mark the route as Great Lakes Waterfront Trail..
  - Communities provide mounting hardware and install the signs.
  - Recommended signage audit. August - September, 2019
  - Confirm wayfinding plan for the route with communities.
  - Confirm wayfinding plan and signage inventory for the route with communities October - November, 2019
  - WRT arranges for production and delivery of signs. December 2019 – January, 2020
  - Community installs signs in time for an announcement April - June, 2020
  - Identify candidate sites for trailhead signs. Secure funding and install.
- ☐ **Promotions and web resources** January-March, 2020
  - Update WRT collateral material
  - Tourism profiles on GLWT website. Identify regional loops, family-friendly options
  - GLWT information on local and regional web sites and collateral material
- ☐ **Launch route with GWTA-style cycling holiday** Post 2020

# Establish Route Alignment



- Georgian Bay Cycling Route Feasibility Study (2014);
- Ontario Provincial Cycling Route Map (2018);
- South Georgian Bay Routes Map (2018);
- Heart of Georgian Bay Cycling Map (2018);
- Ontario's Lake Country Bike Map (2018);
- Simcoe County GIS;
- Ontario By Bike;
- Strava data;
- The Great Trail;

- Muskoka Web Map;
- Cycle Gravenhurst;
- Discover Muskoka;
- Bike Muskoka;
- West Parry Sound Geography Network;
- Cycle MacTier;
- Seguin Township GIS;
- Cycle Parry Sound;
- Voyageur Cycling Route;
- Local Cyclists;



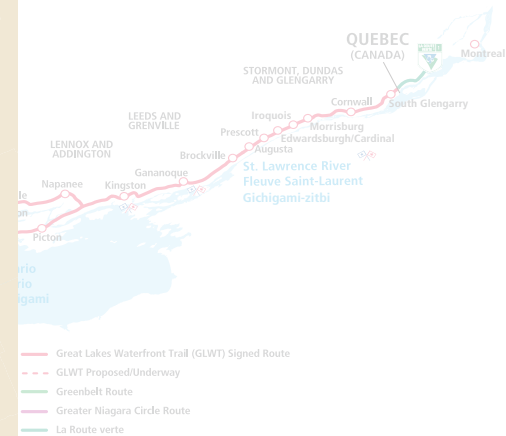
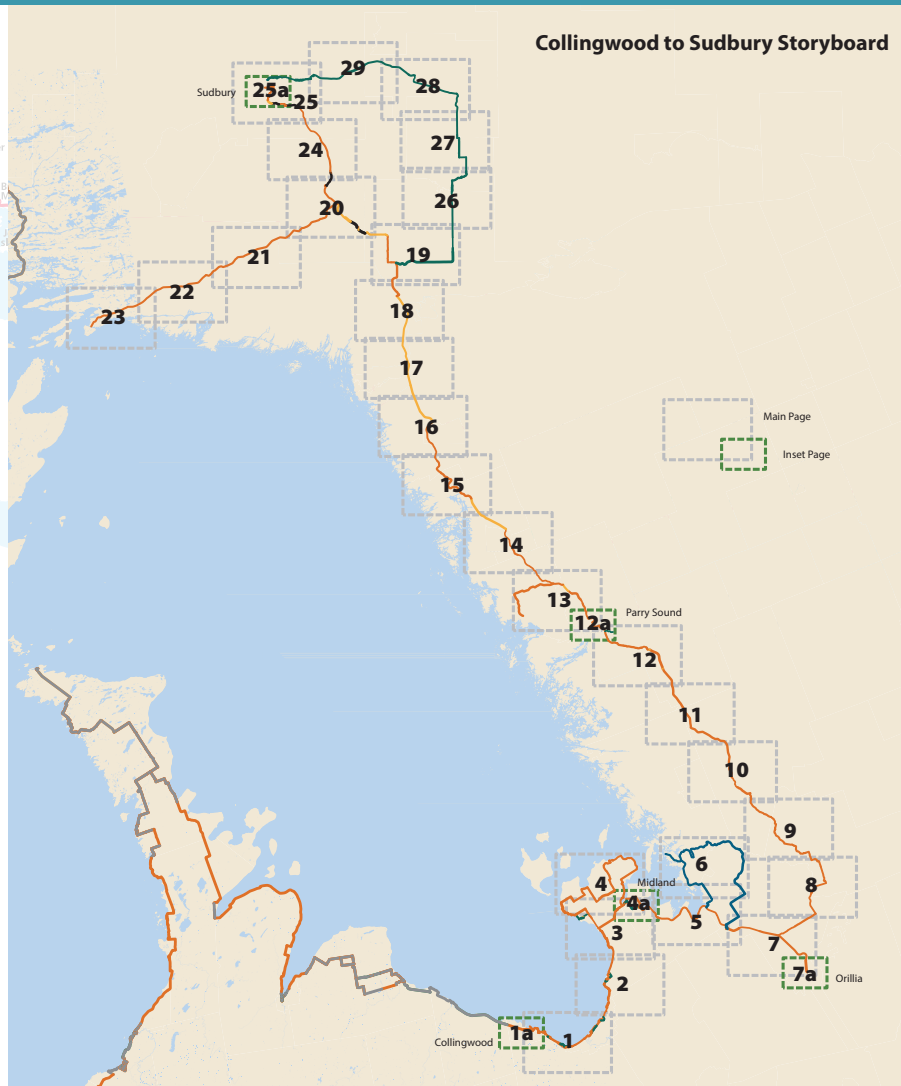
- Regional kickoff meetings (September 25<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>, & October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018);
- Discussions with local and regional staff (going forward);
- Discussions with MTO (ongoing).





# Map the Route

Nov 2018 –  
Aug, 2019





# Map the Route

Nov 2018 –  
Aug, 2019



Great Lakes  
Waterfront Trail  
A signature project of the Waterfront Regeneration Trust



The Charity

The Trail

Maps

Trip Ideas

Community Profiles

Great Waterfront Trail Adver

## Interactive Map

### Distance and Directions

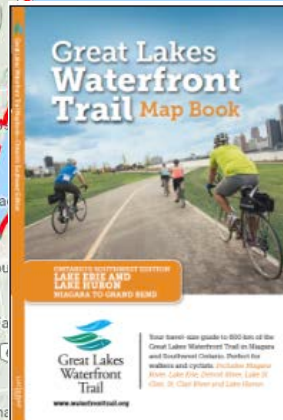
3 Birch Street, Collingwood, ON, Canada

302 Simcoe County Road 34, Collingwood, ON, Canada

Routing provided by Google Maps may not follow Waterfront Trail.

**Bicycling** via Georgian Trail

6.0 km (20 min)



Check Trail  
closures and  
Waterfront  
Trail  
notices  
here

The Great Lakes Waterfront Trail connects:

- 140 Communities, villages and First Nations
- 3 Great Lakes, touching a fourth, Lake Superior in Prince Township
- 5 Bi-national Rivers



# Map the Route

Huron to Tobermory Map 22 of 22

Map 22 Trail Length: 22 km



Distance and Directions

5166-5168 Lakeshore Road, Burlington, ON, Canada

Waterfront Trail, Hamilton, ON, Canada

Routing provided by Google Maps may not follow Waterfront Trail.

**Bicycling** via Lakeshore Rd and Breezeway  
Walking

16.8 km (52 min)



Clear Route Less ...

Directions

Bicycling directions are in beta. Use caution – This route may contain streets that aren't suited for bicycling.

**A** 5166-5168 Lakeshore Rd, Burlington, ON L7L 1C7, Canada

16.8 km. About 52 mins

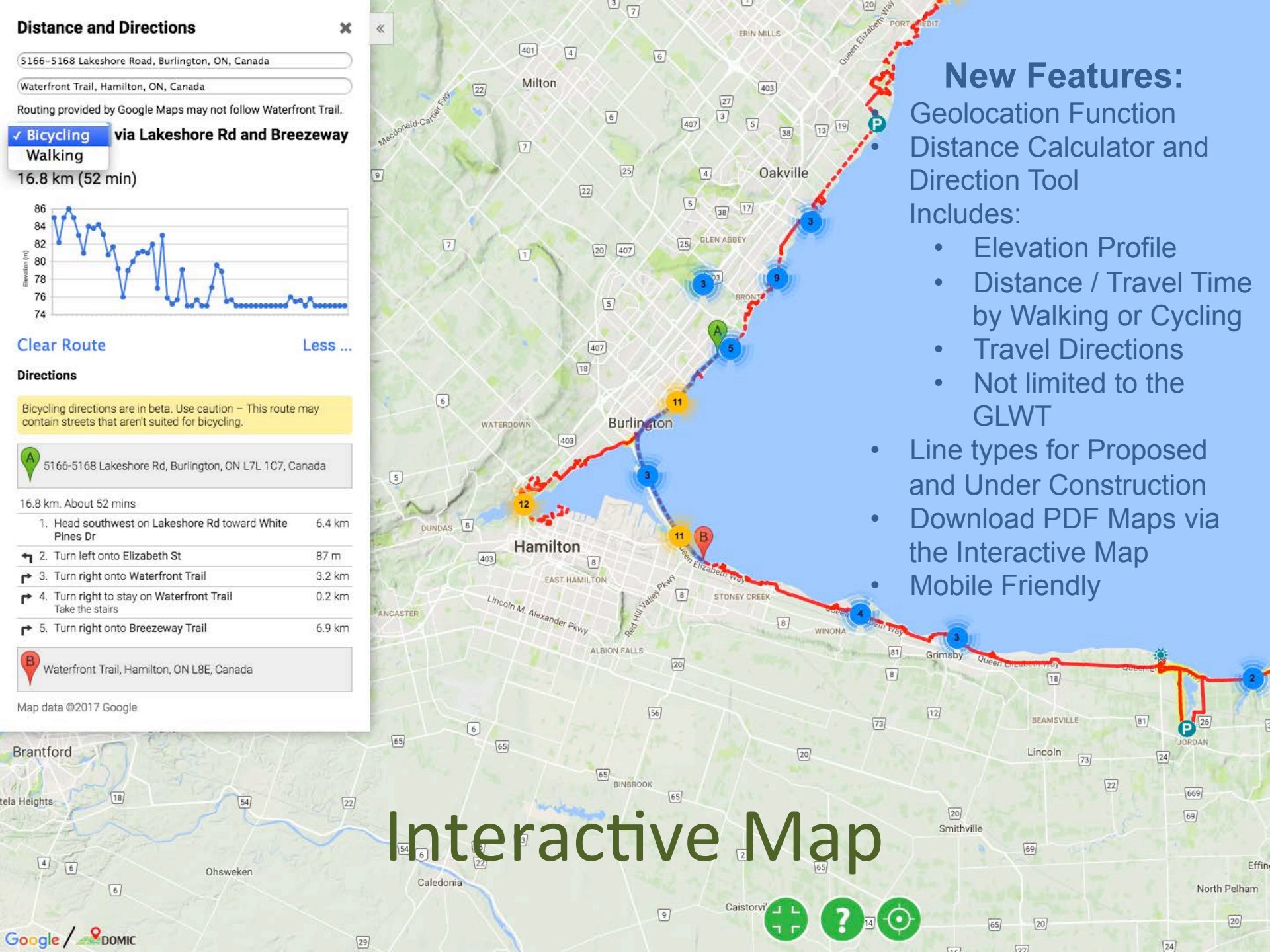
- |                                                              |        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| 1. Head southwest on Lakeshore Rd toward White Pines Dr      | 6.4 km |
| 2. Turn left onto Elizabeth St                               | 87 m   |
| 3. Turn right onto Waterfront Trail                          | 3.2 km |
| 4. Turn right to stay on Waterfront Trail<br>Take the stairs | 0.2 km |
| 5. Turn right onto Breezeway Trail                           | 6.9 km |

**B** Waterfront Trail, Hamilton, ON L8E, Canada

Map data ©2017 Google

- ### New Features:
- Geolocation Function
  - Distance Calculator and Direction Tool
- Includes:
- Elevation Profile
  - Distance / Travel Time by Walking or Cycling
  - Travel Directions
  - Not limited to the GLWT
  - Line types for Proposed and Under Construction
  - Download PDF Maps via the Interactive Map
  - Mobile Friendly

# Interactive Map





# Wayfinding



Directional-on road  
450 by 450 mm  
450 by 600 mm



Dedicated Trail  
150 by 150mm  
Or to suit local signage plans

- Uses consistent, recognizable blaze for 3000 km of Trail
- Builds user confidence
- Guidelines provide a consistent plan that complements OTM Book 18
- Opportunities to include local trail identity, attractions and loops
- GLWT signage guidelines and print-ready templates available at:

<https://waterfronttrail.org/partner-resources/signage-guidelines-templates/>



Multi-Use Trail Blazes  
300 by 300 mm  
300 by 450 mm  
300 by 300 mm with arrow

# Wayfinding



## Trailhead Signs

- Placed at key locations
- 44" x 60" wall-mounted or mounted on two 3.25" x 3.25" posts
- Overview, key and detail maps
- GLWT and major connecting trails
- Partner logos



# Future Launch

## Great Waterfront Trail Adventure (GWTA) Annual Cycle Tour

### Join us for the 2019 GWTA

Sault Ste Marie to Sudbury

- Annual cycling holiday started in 2008
- Fully-supported
- Showcase communities & local businesses
- CAA a major partner
- \$204K direct economic impact to local communities
- Political engagement along the route





# Building word of mouth reputation for the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail as a Great cycling experience and Ontario as an International cycling destination

3,000 KM OF EXTRAORDINARY CYCLING  
ACROSS BEAUTIFUL ONTARIO



- 97% will recommend the GWTA to friends & family.
- 99% will recommend the area to friends & family.
- 79% felt safe
- 98% said the Trail provided a great cycling experience
- 99% see the Trail as an important part of regenerating the Great Lakes
- Generates return visits- 75% plan to come back to the area within 2 yrs
- 45% of Ontarians know about the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail
- Ontario By Bike Partnership
  - Cycling in Ontario ad
  - Digital promotions and legacy itineraries:  
<https://www.ontariobybike.ca/150-itineraries#/>
- Trade shows
- Promotional and collateral resources



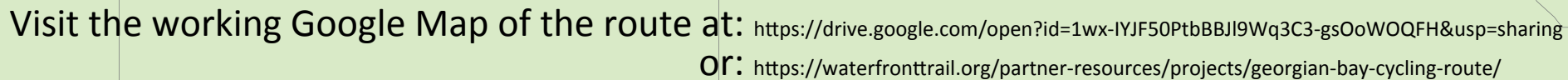
# Cycling Contributes

- **\$133B annually to U.S. Economy**
  - generates \$17.7B in annual federal and state tax revenue
  - produces \$53.1 billion annually in retail sales and services
  - 60M recreational bicyclists
- **\$1.2B annually in spending in Québec**
  - creates the equivalent of 10K jobs
  - adds \$215 million in tax revenues
  - Public investment of \$250M to create la Route Verte and generates \$134M annually—ROI in 2 years.
- **1.6 million cycling visits in Ontario accounted for \$517M**
- **41% of Ontarians say they want to ride a bicycle more than they currently do**
- **On average cyclists spend \$317 per trip**
- **94% of visits by cyclists were overnight visits**
- **53% believe Province should provide more funding for municipal/regional bike tourism initiatives**
- **48% would tour to other parts of Ontario if they cycled more**
- **70% agree Ontario should promote cycle tourism**

[Sources: <https://www.adventurecycling.org/routes-and-maps/us-bicycle-route-system/benefits-and-building-support/economic-impact/>  
<http://www.velo.qc.ca/en/Viewpoint/Cycling-in-Quebec-in-2015-confirms-the-growing-popularity-of-hiking>]

Ontario Cycling Tourism Statistics 2016/2014, Tourism Research Unit  
Share the Road Coalition 2014





Project Lead  
Dave Meyer  
[projects@wrtrust.com](mailto:projects@wrtrust.com)  
416-943-8080