



Great Lakes Waterfront Trail

25
YEARS

PROTECT
CONNECT
CELEBRATE

Leader's Mobile Workshop

David Meyer

March 3, 2020

Waterfront Regeneration Trust



Waterfront
Regeneration
Trust

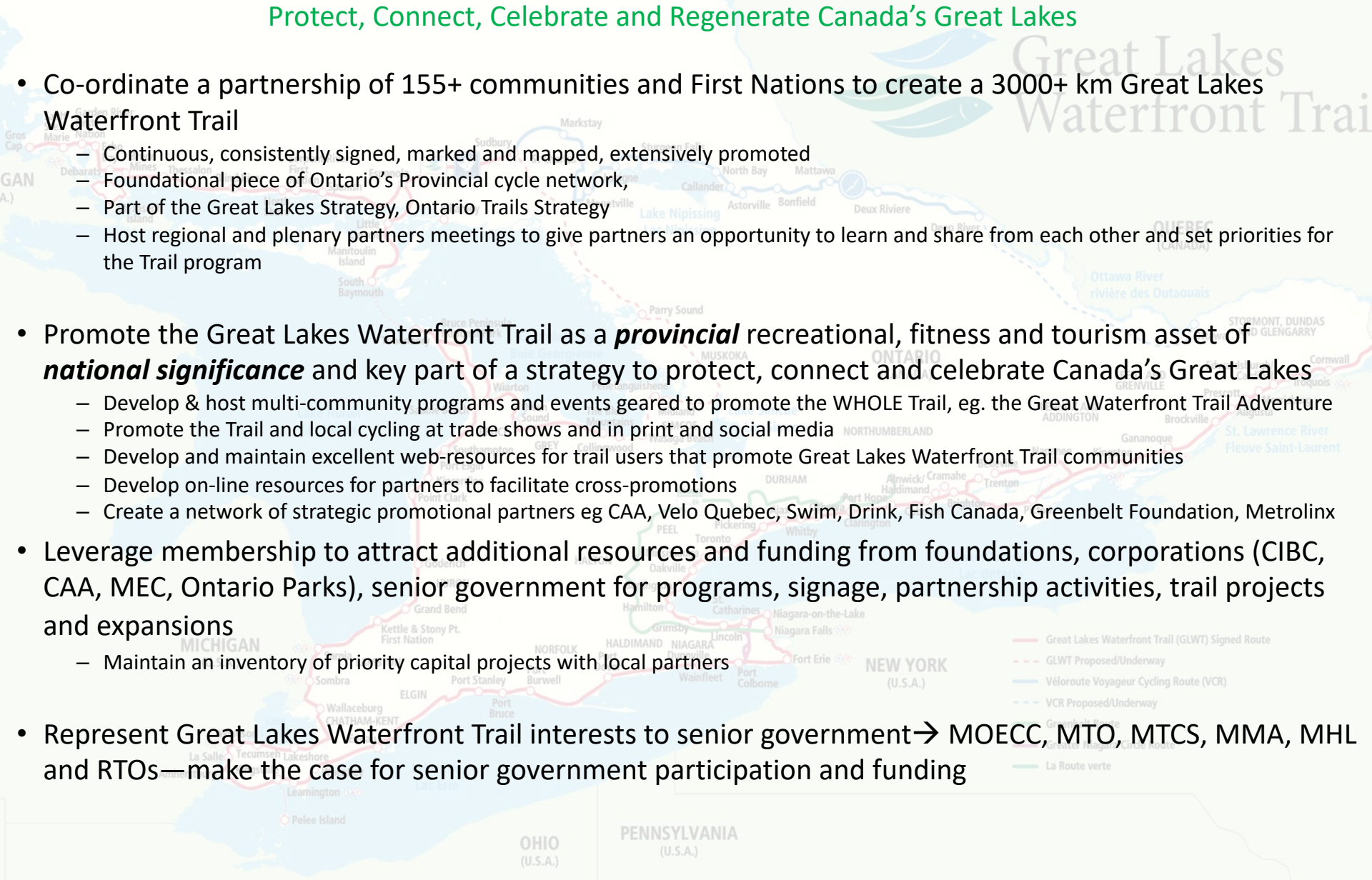




Waterfront Regeneration Trust

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

- Co-ordinate a partnership of 155+ 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



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.*



- 3000 km, signed route
- 155+ partner 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
- 4 UNESCO Biospheres, 40 Provincial Parks, 700+ parks, beaches, conservation areas, 100s heritage attractions



Update and Next Steps

Phase II

- Funding via Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries
- Phase II resolution: March, 2020
- Focus:
 - Promotional development
 - Map review and testing
 - Route review and Market Readiness Assessment

Challenge

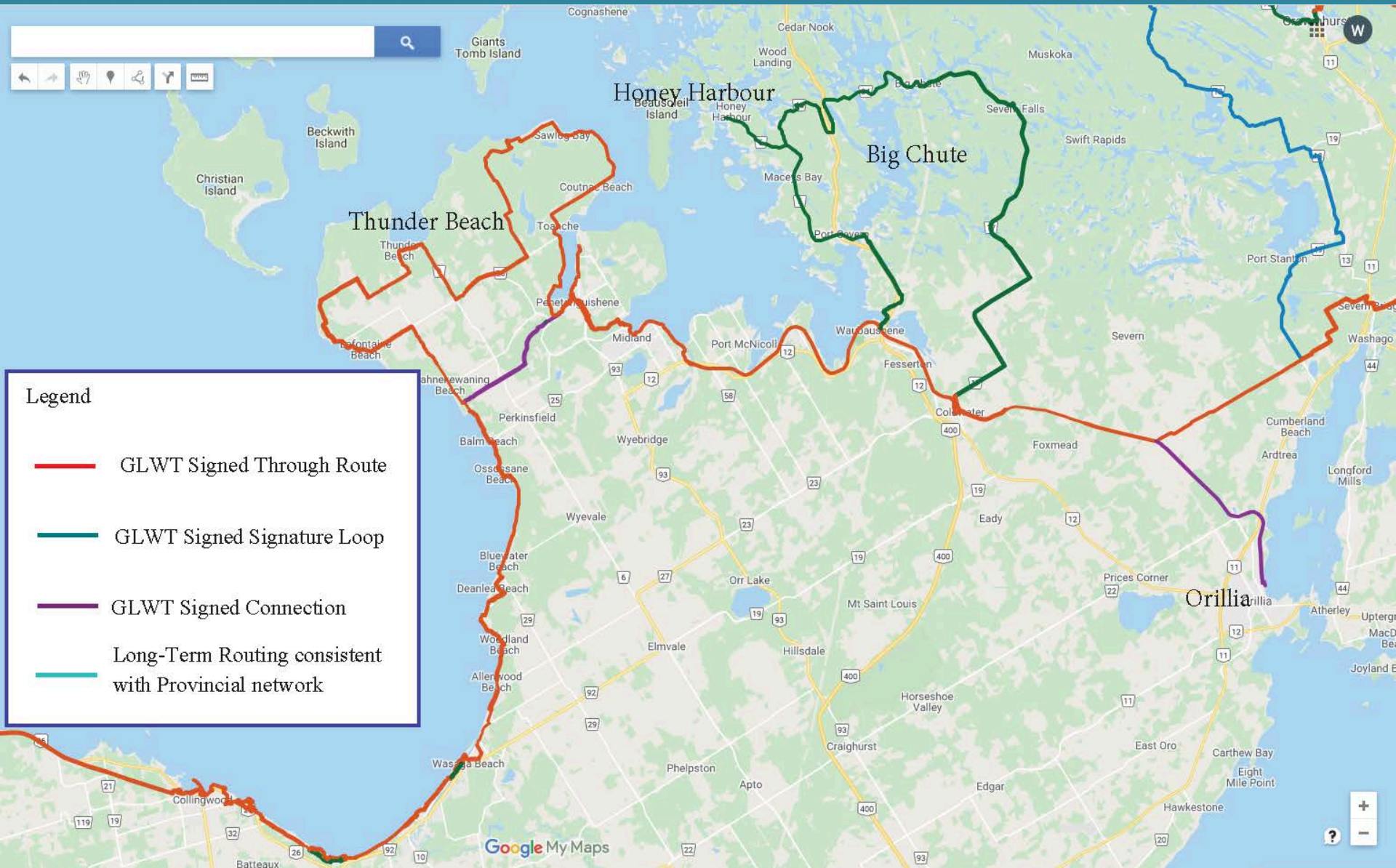
- Funding for sign faceplates

Next Steps

- Mapping signoff
- Signage letter of support
- Signage Audit and signage plan development
- Legacy: Continue working with MTO and Greater Sudbury to complete Sudbury connection.

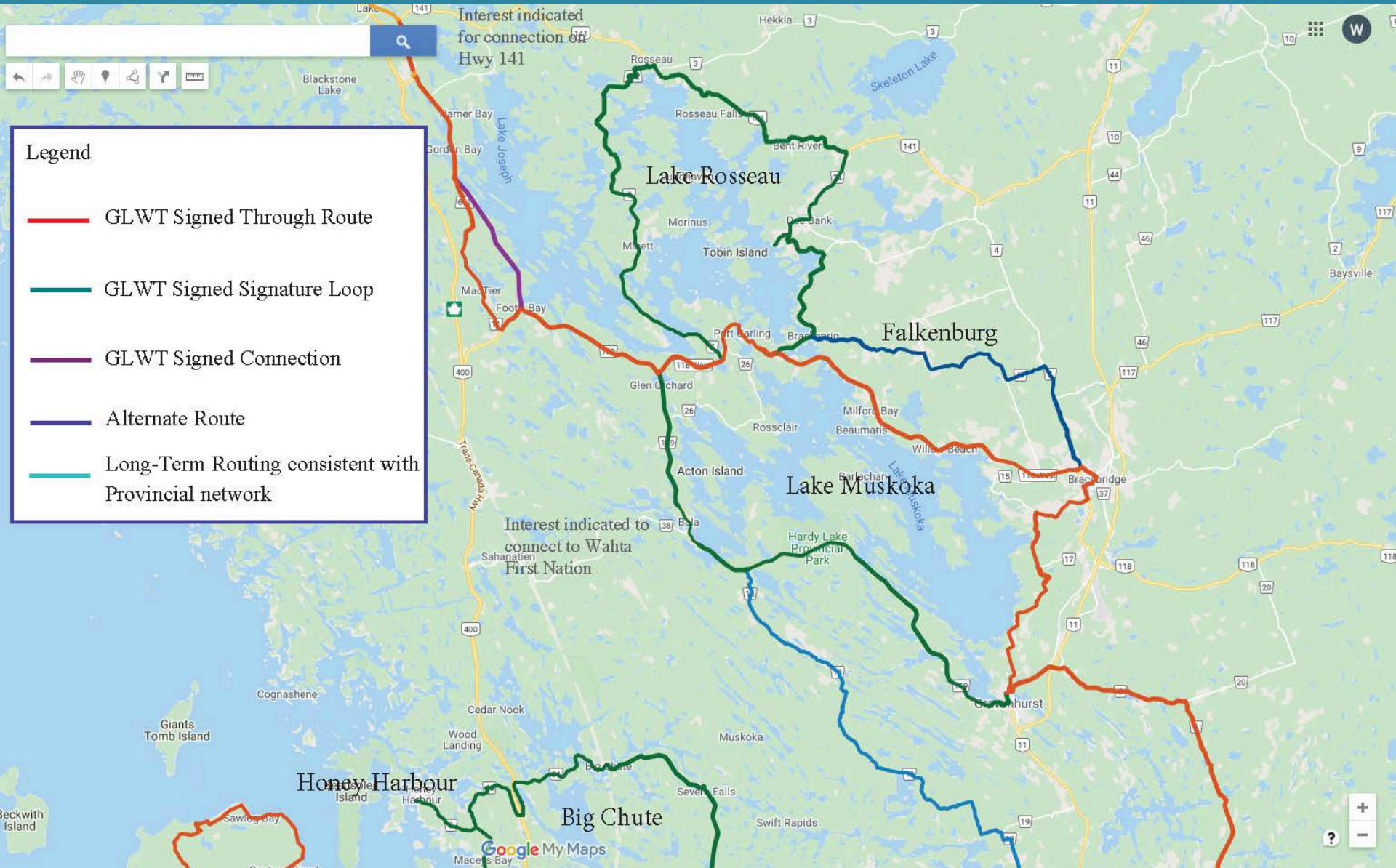


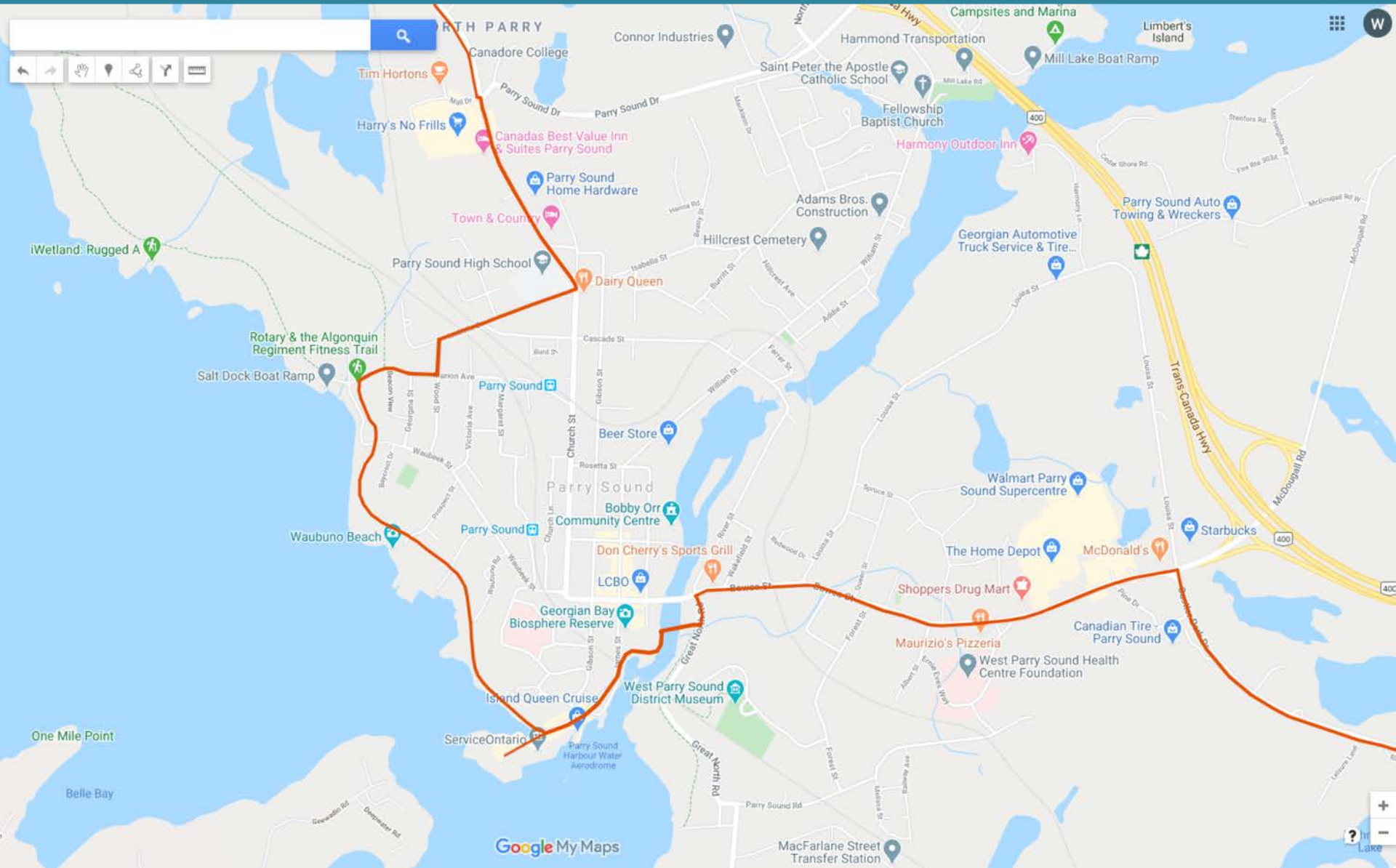
Through Route and Signature Loops





Through Route and Signature Loops





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
- Expanding signage to emphasize Junctions
- 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

Through Route



(Existing) Junction Signage



- GLWT wayfinding guidelines for both through route and signature loops are identical. Both would be signed.
- Difference in GLWT blaze treatment is needed to assist with wayfinding
- Existing signage in place from Collingwood to Sault Ste Marie/Sudbury and to Quebec border on the St. Lawrence (3000km approx.)

- Junction signage treatment under review
- Tabbed signage reflects present treatment
- Exploring RTO7 and other trail organization models
- GLWT connects with over 50 major cycling and hiking routes
- Emerging interest in creating a binational trail

Signature Loops



Mapping



Interactive Map

Distance and Directions

Collingwood, ON, Canada

Wasaga Beach, ON, Canada

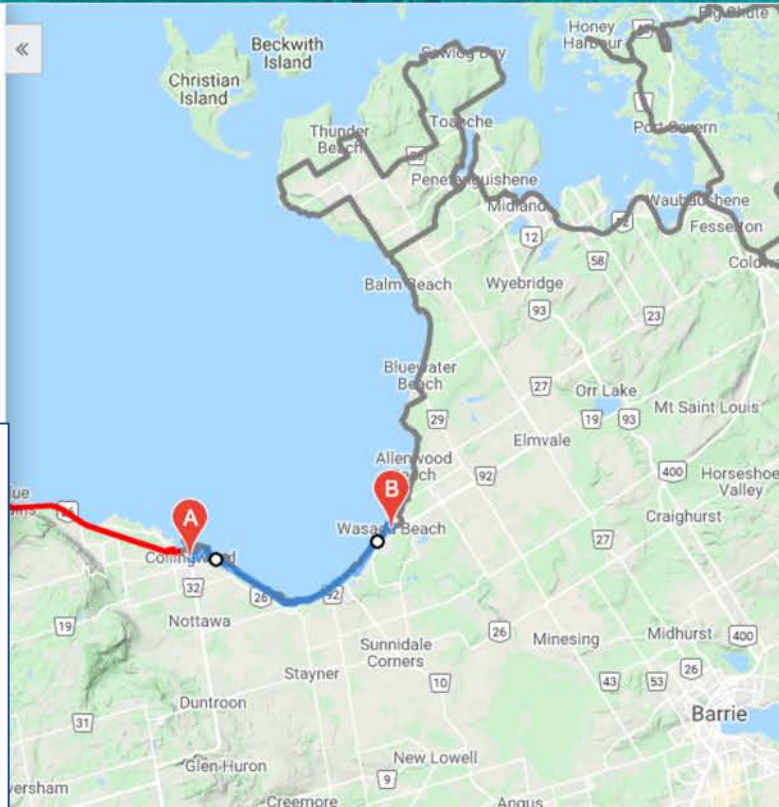
Routing provided by Google Maps may not follow Waterfront Trail.

Bicycling via Beachwood Rd

21.5 km (1 hours 7 min)



Collingwood to Sudbury Map 23 of 40



Check Trail
closures and
Waterfront
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 Review & Comments

Collingwood to Sudbury Map 23 of 40

24 Map 23 Trail Length: 37 km

Wasaga Beach



Maps

Review Focus:

- Route accuracy
- Alerts (yellow notifiers)
- Route labels (wayfinding)
- Landmarks: Heritage and culture, landmark businesses

Note: Mark up directly on map package. Staff will collect your map packages/comments

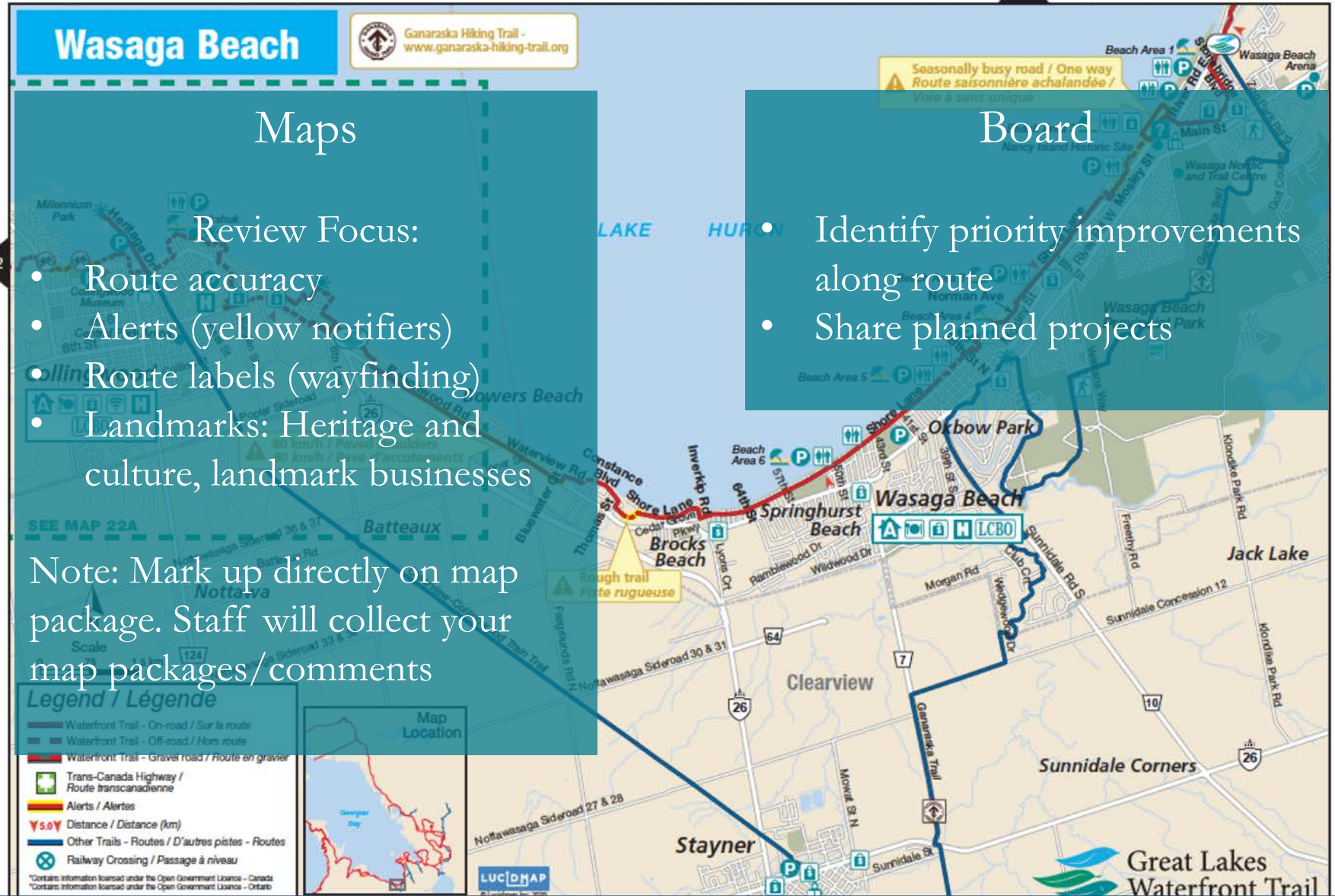
Legend / Légende

- Waterfront Trail - On-road / Sur la route
- Waterfront Trail - Off-road / Hors route
- Waterfront Trail - Gravel road / Route en gravier
- Trans-Canada Highway / Route transcanadienne
- Alerts / Alertes
- Distance / Distance (km)
- Other Trails - Routes / D'autres pistes - Routes
- Railway Crossing / Passage à niveau



Board

- Identify priority improvements along route
- Share planned projects



Future Launch and Promotions

Great Waterfront Trail Adventure (GWTA) Annual Cycle Tour and Awareness Ride

3,000 KM OF EXTRAORDINARY CYCLING
ACROSS BEAUTIFUL ONTARIO



- GWTA 2020 sold out in a record 20 days
- 98% will recommend the GWTA to friends & family.
- 79% will recommend the area (Lake Huron North Channel) to friends & family.
- 78% felt safe on the route, (2019's route included stretches gravel road and riding the paved shoulders of Highway 17)
- 86% 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
- WRT partner microsites

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-biking>]

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

Promotion – WT Microsite

Where the mouth of the Bighead River meets Georgian Bay, you'll find the Town of Meaford, a warm waterfront community with an inviting heritage

- Content developed in collaboration with GLWT Partners – a tool

Microsite includes:

- Focused interactive map
- Local GLWT attributes
- Downloadable maps
- Amenities matrix
- Links to promoted tourism amenities, connecting trails, promoted loops, local maps, itineraries, etc.

[DOWNLOAD PRINTABLE MAP](#)



TRAIL ATTRIBUTES

Trail Distance: 66km

Follows the Georgian Trail for approximately 7km, a compact, screened limestone "rail trail."

Approximately 6km of scenic footpath (hikers only)

The remainder is a mix of paved residential and rural roads, the majority of which are unpaved in the Georgian Highlands area.

LOCAL MAPS
AND
CONNECTIONS

STAGING
AREAS

AMENITIES
AND TRANSIT

HELPFUL
LINKS

Reciprocal Promotion

Algoma
That real.

[Travel Guides](#) [Blog](#) [Book Online](#) [Contact](#) [1-800-263-2546](#)

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WRT promotes partners:

[Cities & Towns](#)

[Where to Stay](#)

[Things to Do](#)

[Trails](#)

- Via community microsites
- Select/promoted loops and itineraries
- Representation at Toronto Outdoor Adventure Show
- Social media
- Using existing photo collateral to promote local businesses on Google Maps
- Updates on Trail conditions (website, social media)

Partners Can:

- Include GLWT in trails sections of local web pages
- Add GLWT routing/logo to promotional/collateral material
- Social media interaction
- Blog posts
- Include GLWT in existing Trails/Cycling promotional initiatives

Mountain Bike & Cycle

Itineraries - Cyclists

WRT is developing an end-to-end cycling itinerary as part of this phase of route development

GLWT promotes regional and inter-regional cycling

End to End travel in Simcoe County, District of Muskoka and Parry Sound favours more experienced leisure and dedicated cyclists factoring in

- Higher traffic sections such as 118w in Muskoka and the shoulders of Highway 69
- Distance between amenities / remote sections of route
- 43% of cyclists are taking 3 or more overnight trips in Ontario in the past 2 years.
- 63% take cycling trips 3 days or more in duration.
- 56% of cyclists prefer self-guided, self-supported cycling trips.
- 43% favour a daily ride distance of 50 to 80km, 36% prefer a distance of 80 to 100km

Source: https://www.transportationoptions.org/uploads/8/7/2/0/8720033/2019_cycle_tourism_sector_report.pdf



Itineraries

Use these social media tags to share: #WaterfrontTrail #TheGreatTrail @CAASCO @ExploreON @WaterfrontRT @TheGreatTrail

DAY 03

Instagram: @Waterfront_RT

Twitter: @WaterfrontRT

Bruce Mines to Blind River: 96 km

- Focus on 50-80km daily

- Recommend:

- Long-term parking / staging areas

- Overnight accommodations, including in mid-way / lunch communities

- Rest stops

Today's Gravel Grind: 19 km Approx.

- Meal recommendations

- "Landmarks"

- Heritage/culture resources for content

- Off-bike activities

- Local travel tips

Content will be used to produce an expansion mini-guide, made available with GLWT mapping as a free resource for public.

② 22 km – Suggested Stop - Little Rapids

General Store [Map 2]:

A great place to grab a few items and fuel up.

Tip: If you like cheese, they stock over 30 flavours. If you like sausage, theirs is considered the best around. If you're a messy eater, buy a shirt and save your jersey!

③ 23 km – Turn off for Side Trip to Thessalon - Highly Recommended (+10km return) [Map 2]

Turn right at the intersection of Little Rapids Road and Highway 129 for a trip to Thessalon. *The side trip into Thessalon is 5km each way. Plan for a little extra time and consider the extra distance travelled when referring to event mapping.*

You'll cruise along the banks of the Thessalon River, past the scenic red bridge into the heart of this nearly two-century old community with roots in the lumber trade.

There are several amenities in Thessalon including a local grocer, Sunset Beach Family Restaurant and Carolyn Beach Inn and Restaurant. Spending the night at Carolyn Beach Inn or Thessalon Lakeside Park Campground are both a great overnight options.

In Thessalon you can also enjoy local beaches, including a public beach at the end of Algoma St.

④ 8:30am to 10:30am

28 km – Thessalon Marina:

56 Algoma Street East [Map 2]

Visit the water station for a water refill and ideas where to stop for a dip at the beach

⑤ 10:00am to 11:30am

33 km - Brownlee Lake Park

[Map 2] 136 Ingram Road, Thessalon, ON

Nestled in the corner of Ingram and Brownlee Road you'll find the entrance to this resort and campground with serene views of Brownlee Lake, a beach and a small restaurant.

⑥ 11:30am to 2:00pm

60 km – Iron Bridge Historical Museum.

Suggested Lunch Stop [Map3]: 1 James St.

Heritage Hookup:

Originally named "Tally-Ho," this town, with its history steeped in farming and lumber, was renamed in 1886 in honour of the iron bridge that spans these quiet shores of the Mississagi River, the first iron bridge constructed in Ontario. That bridge was eventually replaced after almost a century of use, but its spirit lives on in the Veterans Bridge that connects to nearby Tally-Ho park, and which you'll cross on today's journey.

During your visit to Iron Bridge, you'll find 3 restaurants and a convenience store. Public restrooms are also available at the local arena.

Restaurants: [Map 3]. Reserve ahead of time where possible or be prepared to wait:

• **Red Top Motor Inn** – 705 843 2100

(vegan/vegetarian options available)

• **Three Aces Restaurant** – 705 843 2135

(Chinese/Canadian)

• **Village Inn Diner** – 705-509-2010

(new diner location on the Eastern side of town – lots of seating).



Great Lakes Waterfront Trail

PROTECT. CONNECT. CELEBRATE.

Next Steps:

- Signage letter of support;
- Sign off on microsite content (WRT will reach out regarding written content) – expect Feb/March;
- Reciprocal promotion of GLWT on local websites;
- Signage audit and signage plan development (WRT).

Visit the working map online at: <https://waterfronttrail.org/map/interactive-map-2/>

Thank you

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