



# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

Lorenz Calcagno

Chair of Guelph Trailway

GTW is the Guelph section of G2G Rail Trail

Covered Bridge - Downtown Guelph -

- Kissing Bridge Trailway



# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

G2G Rail Trail

Guelph to Goderich

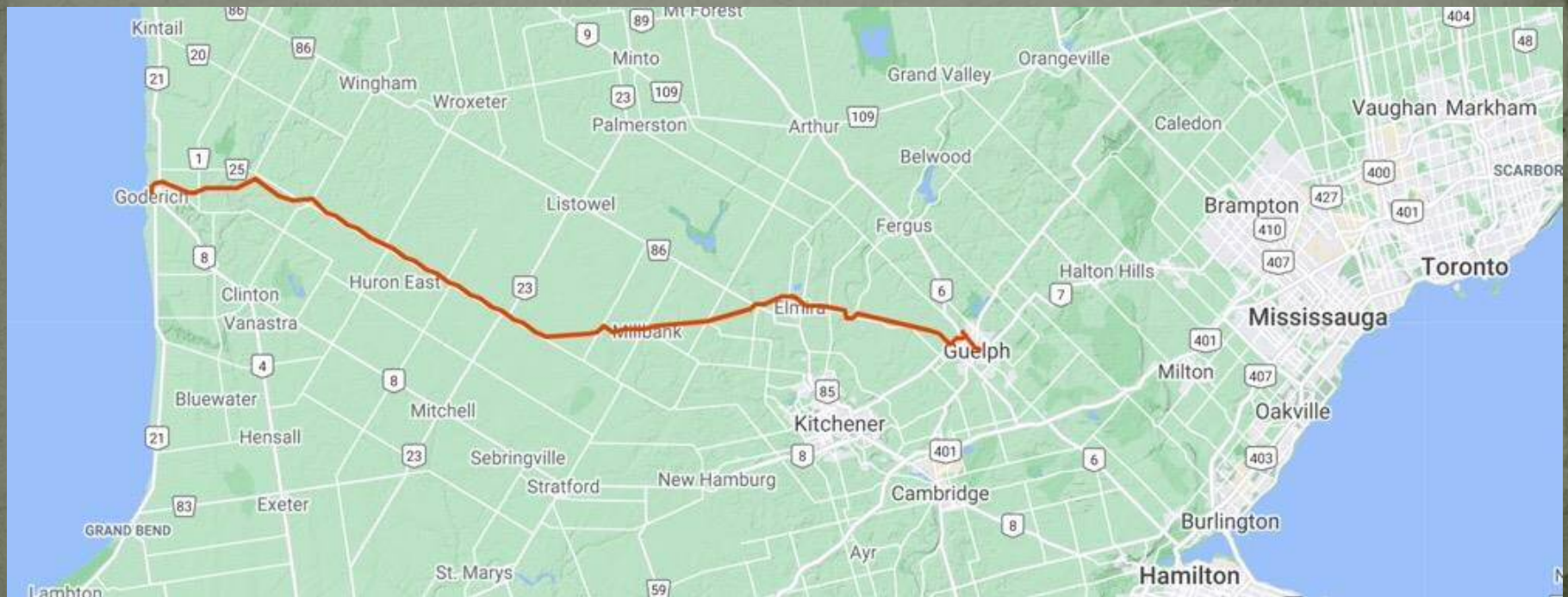
146 km long

Charitable Non Profit





# G2G 146 km





# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

The G2G Rail Trail resurfaced in 2020

Cost \$253K with \$76K from OMAFRA.

Wayfinding signs every km.





# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

So why is this relevant?



# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

Municipal Accommodation Tax

## **Key Finding**

1 - Attracting more overnight visitors and increasing economic impact in the community





# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

Municipal Accommodation Tax

## **Key Finding**

2 - collect revenues for Tourism services, organizations and businesses, investment in infrastructure



# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

Cycle Tourism















# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

G2G is poised to be the home of  
Cycle Tourism in Ontario  
Guelph is where the trip begins





# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

User come from all over  
southern Ontario and beyond already



# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

Cycling Tourists are the best!

\$255/trip vs \$171/trip for regular tourist

**Groups of 3 or more**

50% of Cycle tourists vs only

25% of Regular Tourists

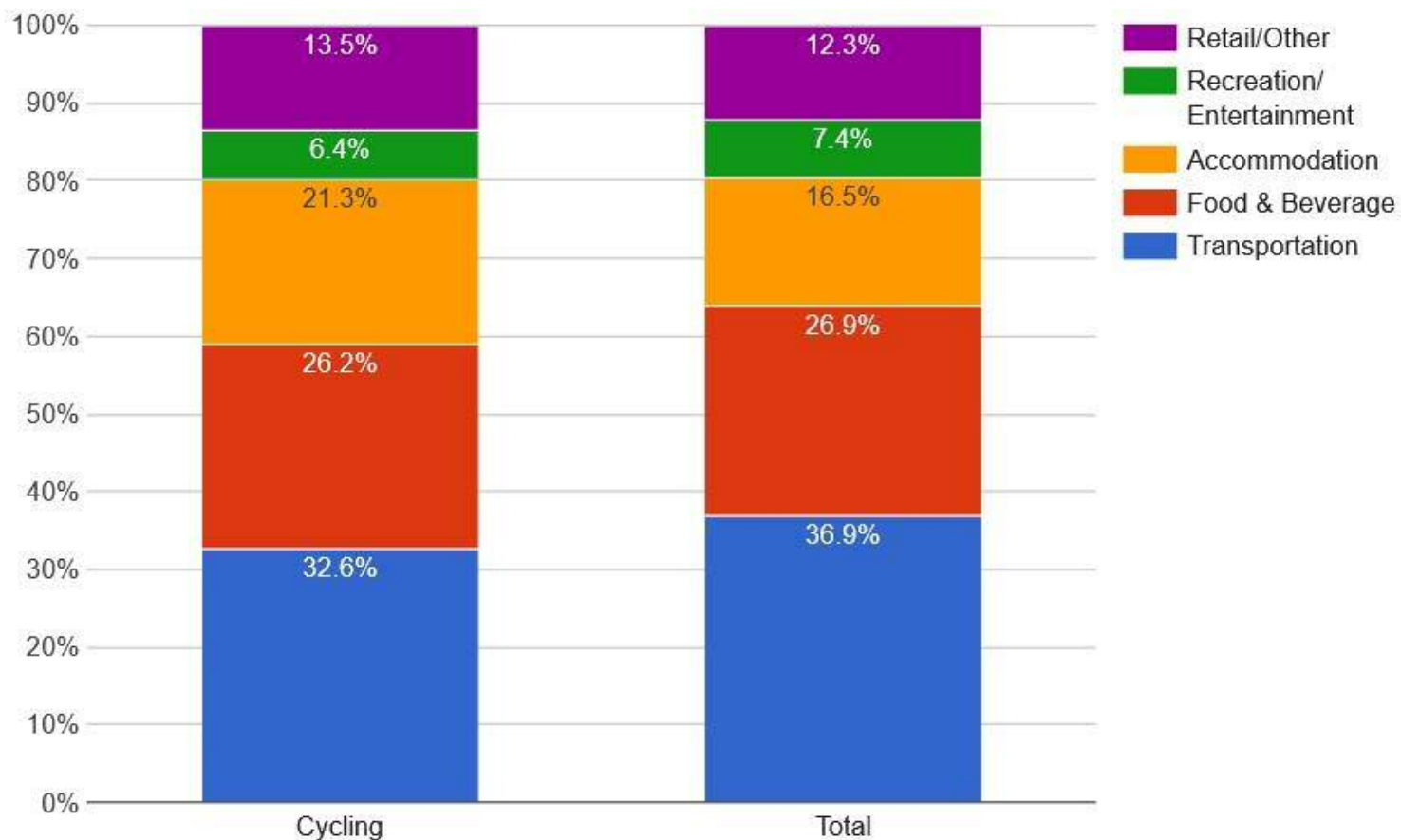


- Tourism
  - Investing in tourism
  - Resource-based tourism
  - Tourism-Oriented Directional Signing
  - Tourism regions
  - Tourism research
  - Business Tools, Strategies, Reports and Resources for the

[Print Text-Only \(HTML\)](#) [Print Full Colour \(PDF\)](#)

## Ontario's Cycling Tourism Plan

### Figure 3: Cycling Spending Breakdown





# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

2017 Economic Impact Study

O&E Canal Towpath Trail, NY

\$3.7 million in hard goods

\$160K soft goods

\$3 million in lodging





# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

2020 G2G = 180K trips

Day trip traveler = \$30

Overnight stay traveler = \$235



# Economic Impact Research Summary

---

Six Economic Impact Comparisons for the  
multiuse Guelph Trailway in Guelph and region.





# Economic Impact Research

Great Allegheny Passage,  
Pittsburgh PA to Cumberland, MD

---

**Distance:** 212 km (132 miles)

**Year of study:** 2008

**Source of Study:** The Progress Fund's Trail Town Program, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau and the Allegheny Trail Alliance

**Key findings:** Over **\$40 million** in trail attributed revenue and it was projected that businesses distributed **\$7.5 million in wages annually**.



# Economic Impact Research

## O&E Canal Towpath Trail Ohio

---

**Distance:** 162 km (101 miles)

**Year of study:** 2017

**Source of Study:** The Ohio & Erie Canal Trail User Spending Impact Study

**Key findings:** An estimated 222,005 annual users spending: a) \$3.7 million on “hard goods”; b) \$3 million on lodging; and c) \$159,000 on “soft goods. Based on the Trail User Spending Impact Study, a cumulative \$6.9 million was spent by trail users annually.





# Economic Impact Research

## Katy Trail, Missouri

---

**Distance:** 386 km (240 miles)

**Year of study:** 2012

**Source of Study:** Katy Trail Economic Impact Report, commissioned by Missouri State Parks

**Key findings:** The Katy Trail attracts 400,000 visitors annually and generates a total economic impact of over \$18 million, supporting 367 jobs. For every one dollar spent by Missouri State Parks to operate Katy Trail State Park, Missouri's economy saw \$18 in return



# Economic Impact Research

Erie Canal Trail,  
NY

---

**Distance:** 455 km (277 miles)

**Year of study:** 2012

**Source of Study:** The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail

**Key findings:** Overall (including direct and secondary effects), ECT visitor spending generates approximately \$253 million in sales, 3,440 jobs, \$78 million in labor income and \$28.5 million in taxes in the local economy each year.





# Economic Impact Research

## Oil Heritage Region Trail network, PA

---

**Distance:** 97 km (60 miles)

**Year of study:** 2006

**Source of Study:** Funded by the Oil Region Alliance for Business, Industry & Tourism and Allegheny Valley Trails Assoc.

**Key findings:** Approximately 160,792 users frequented the trail system, creating an estimated overall economic impact of \$4.3 million in the study year.



# Economic Impact Research

## Whitefish Trail, MT

---

**Distance:** 68 km (42 miles)

**Year of study:** 2014

**Source of Study:** Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC)

**Key findings:** The trail sees more than 73,000 visitors each year, with about 70% locals who spent twice as much as locals who did not visit the trail. The trail generates nearly \$3.6 million in spending on accommodations, restaurants, groceries, retail, gas, transportation, licenses and entrance fees, outfitters/guides and farmers markets, in that order, from 22,000 non-resident visitors. This revenue supports 68 jobs and generates \$1.9 million in total economic impact.





# G2G – Guelph Trailway

Why are Rail Trails so popular?

---

No hills

No cars

Nice scenery



# G2G – Guelph Trailway

## Who uses Rail Trails?

---

All Ages

All Genders

All Ethnicities

All Shapes

All Sizes

All Abilities

Varied Modalities

All Incomes





# G2G – Guelph Trailway

## Who uses Rail Trails?

---

The Kissing Bridge Trailway has the highest proportion Female to Male bicycle ridership of any thoroughfare in Guelph

*Ref: **Strava Metro Data** - Sample Size: 8,762 users*

















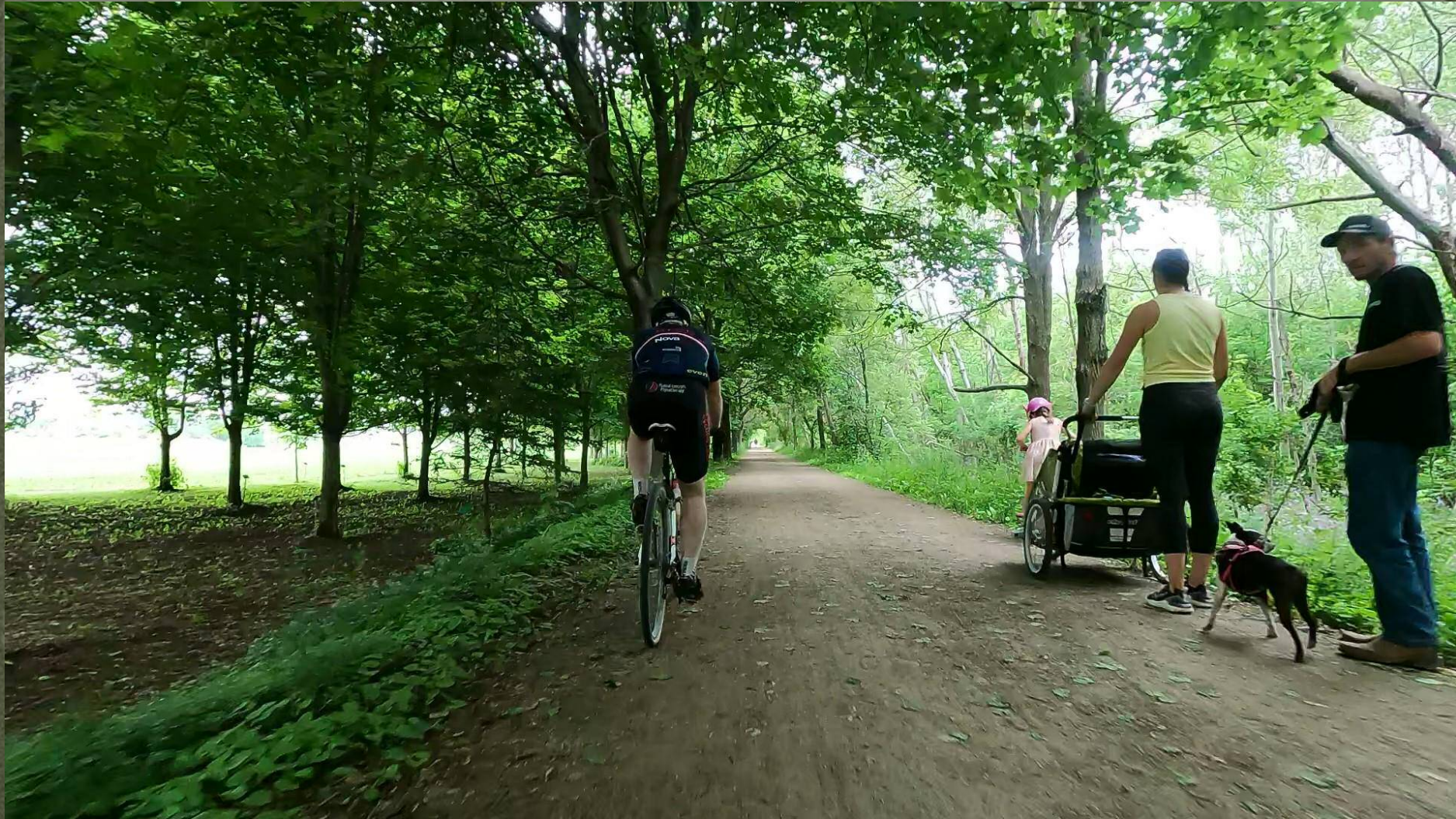
















# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

Our trail has one major limitation...



# G2G – Guelph Trailway

---

Currently most Cycle Tourists begin their  
Guelph to Goderich journey  
outside of Guelph.





Thursday May 27, 2021

## Silvercreek Parkway at Marden Tract



The Uncurated Experience





Thursday May 27, 2021

Silvercreek Parkway at Marden Tract







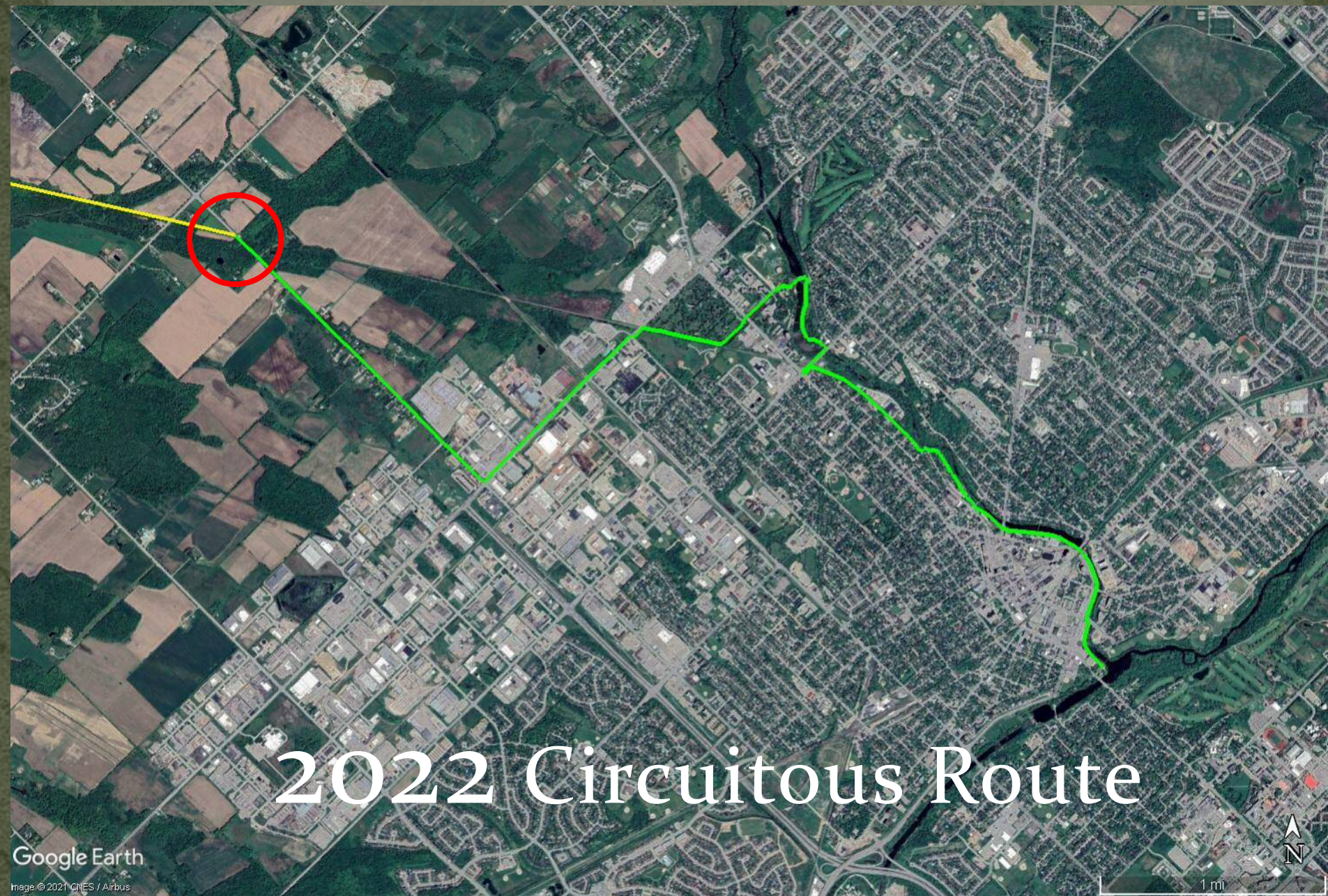
Original Route

Google Earth

Image © 2021 CNES / Airbus

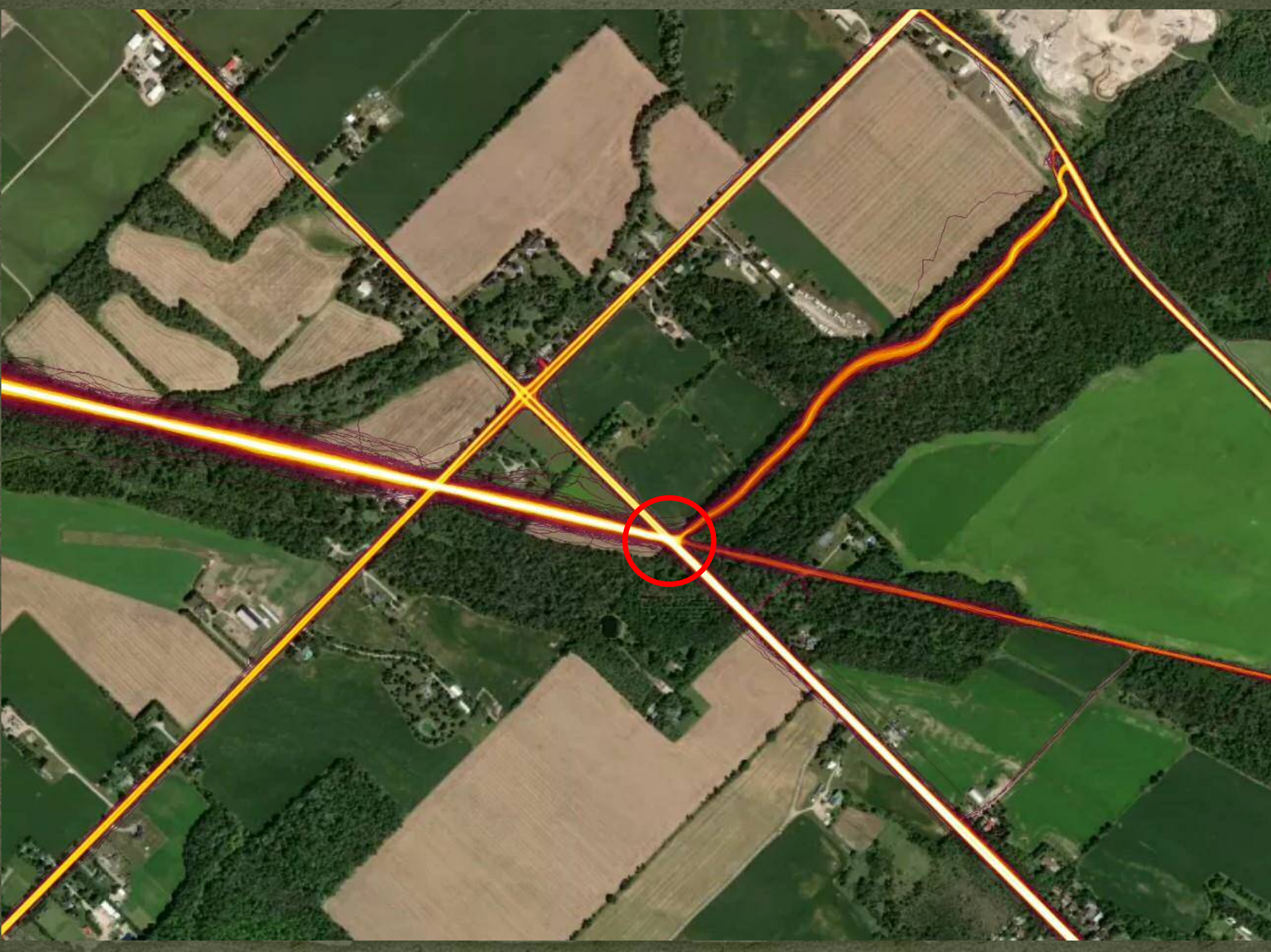
1 mi





2022 Circuitous Route



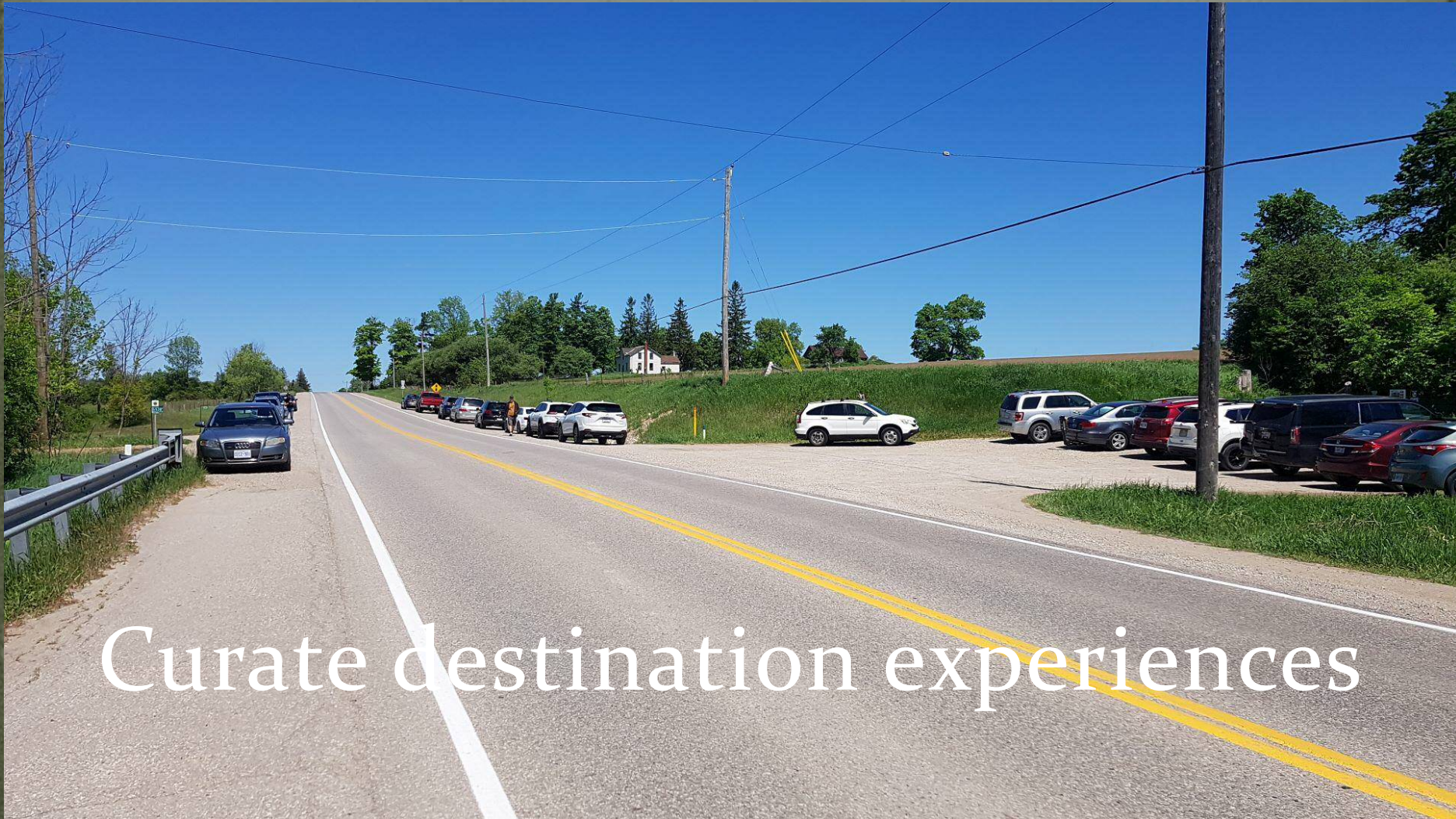






Thursday May 27, 2021

## Silvercreek Parkway at Marden Tract



Curate destination experiences



A satellite map of a city, likely St. Louis, Missouri, showing a mix of urban development and agricultural fields. A bright green line traces a path through the city, starting from the top left, moving southeast, then following a more complex route through the urban area towards the bottom right. A yellow line is visible in the top left corner, running diagonally. The text "Commit to Improvements" and "Earmark Funding:" is overlaid in white serif font in the lower center. In the bottom left corner, "Google Earth" and "Image © 2021 CNES / Airbus" are visible. In the bottom right corner, there is a scale bar for "1 mi" and a north arrow.

# Commit to Improvements Earmark Funding:





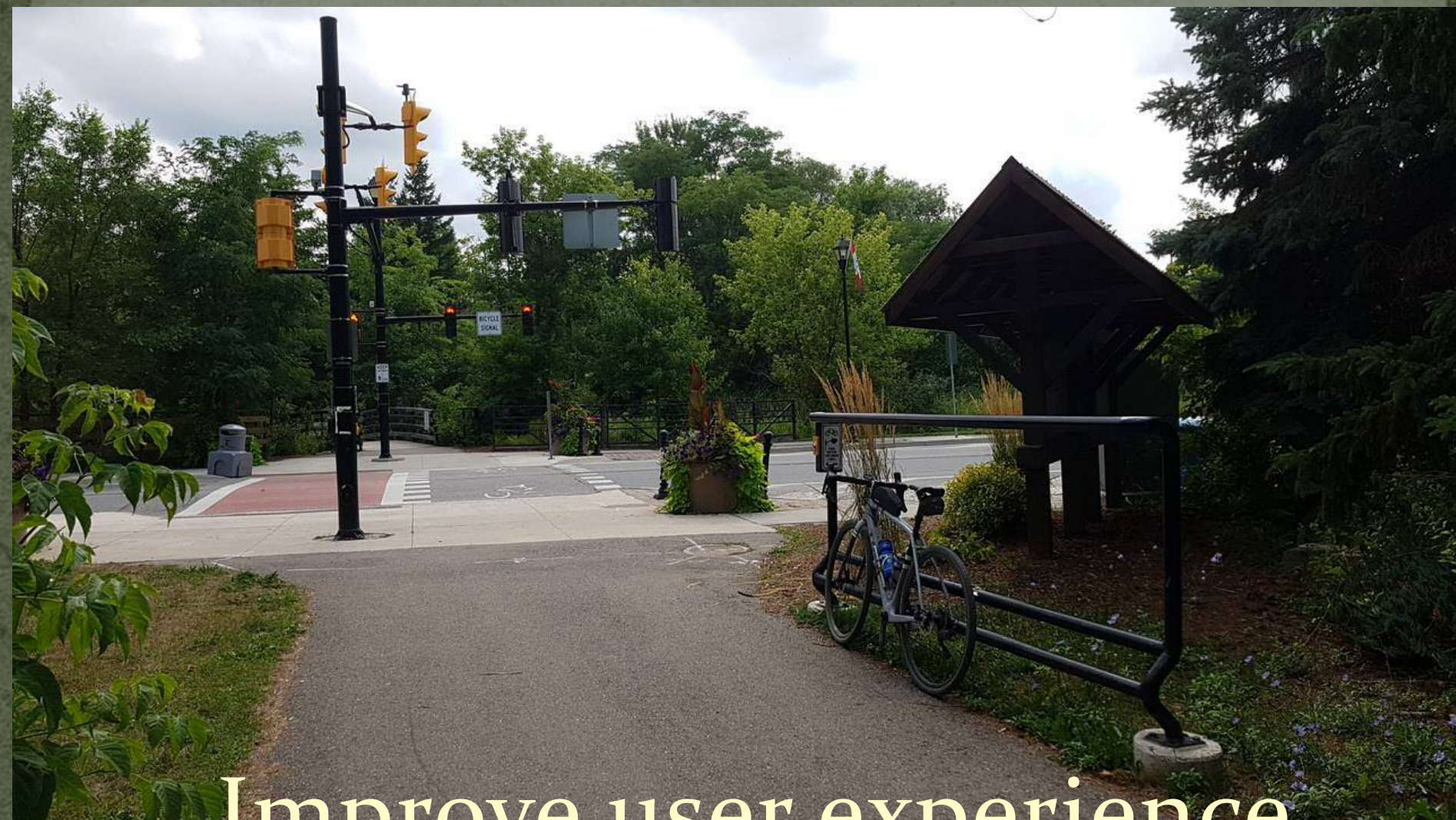
Wayfinding Signage





Wayfinding Signage





Improve user experience





Improve user experience



A photograph of a trailhead sign for the Royal Recreation Trail. The sign is a wooden structure with a shingled roof. It features a map of the trail, the text "Royal Recreation Trail", "Eramosa River Trail 4.1km", and the "City of Guelph" logo. A small sign on the left side of the structure reads "Recreation trailhead" and "In respect of all users". A black trash can and an orange bicycle are parked next to the sign. The background is a dense forest of green trees.

Reinvestment













An aerial photograph of a two-story house with a grey roof and white siding, situated on a narrow strip of land between a canal and a golf course. A small dock with stairs leads from the house into the canal. The golf course is visible in the background, and a road with a crosswalk is on the left. The text "Destination Development" is overlaid in a large, white, serif font at the bottom of the image.

# Destination Development



# G2G Trailhead Start KM 0

- A**  current canoe/kayak rental operations
- B C D E**  proposed canoe/kayak docks
-  canoe/kayak storage corrals
-  bicycle storage corrals
-  car parking areas
-  Bowling Green
-  Boathouse Outdoor Cafe green space
-  optional board walks
-  Pedestrian-controlled Crosswalks
-  G2G Trail
-  G2G Trailhead Sign



Build a Trail Head for the **G2G** inside Guelph



G2G TRAILHEAD  
VIEW FROM NORTH




Build a Trail Head for the **G2G** inside Guelph



G2G TRAILHEAD  
VIEW FROM SOUTH EAST



22 ©  ROBIN BAIRD LEWIS

Build a *must-see* Visitor Destination in Ontario



# G2G Route Improvements

City owned lands



Kissing Bridge  
Trail Head

Marden Tract  
GRCA Owned

GJR  
City owned

G2G Route  
Improvements

Hydro One  
Owned land

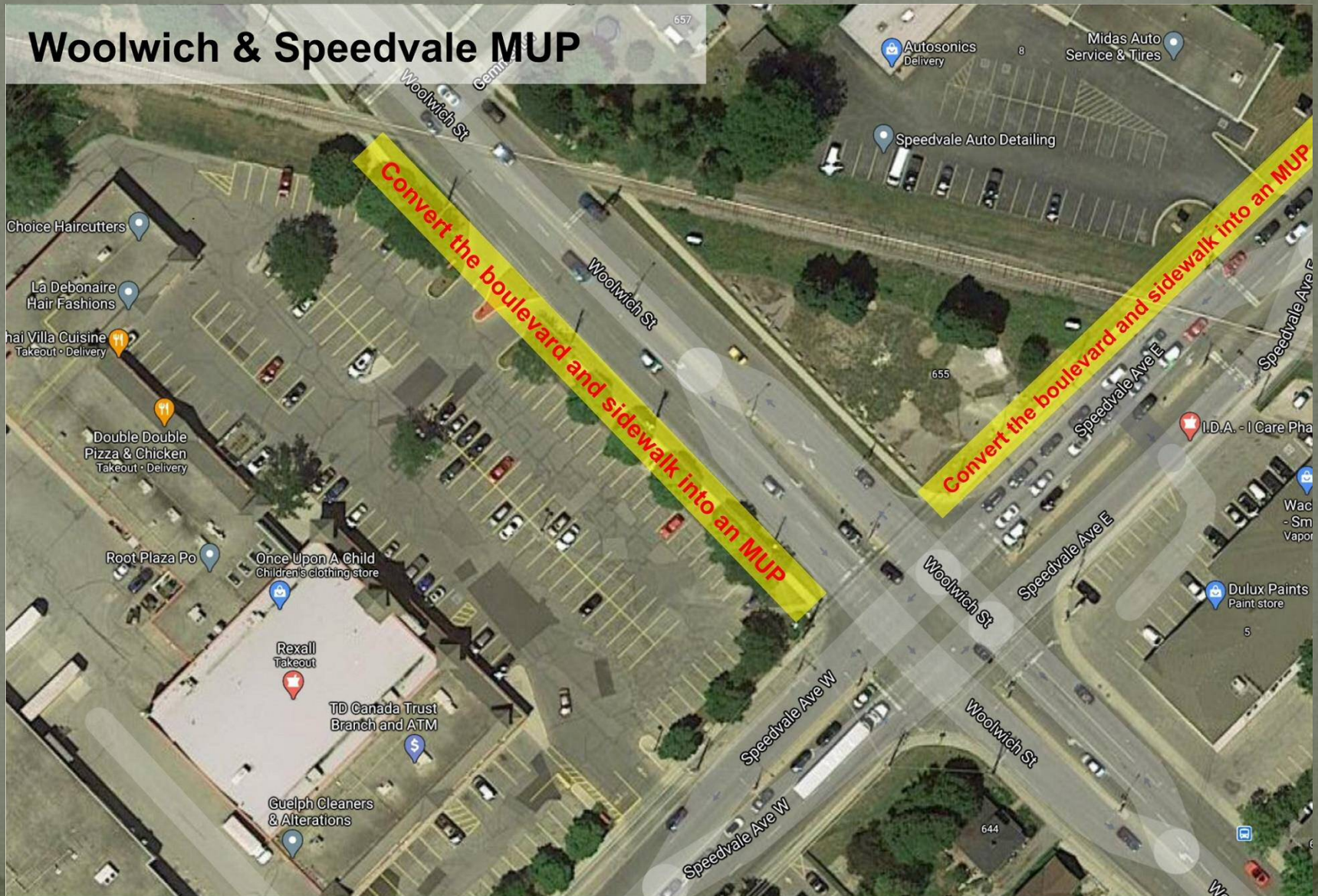




# G2G Route Improvements

This is in the current Speedvale Bridge Plan

## Woolwich & Speedvale MUP



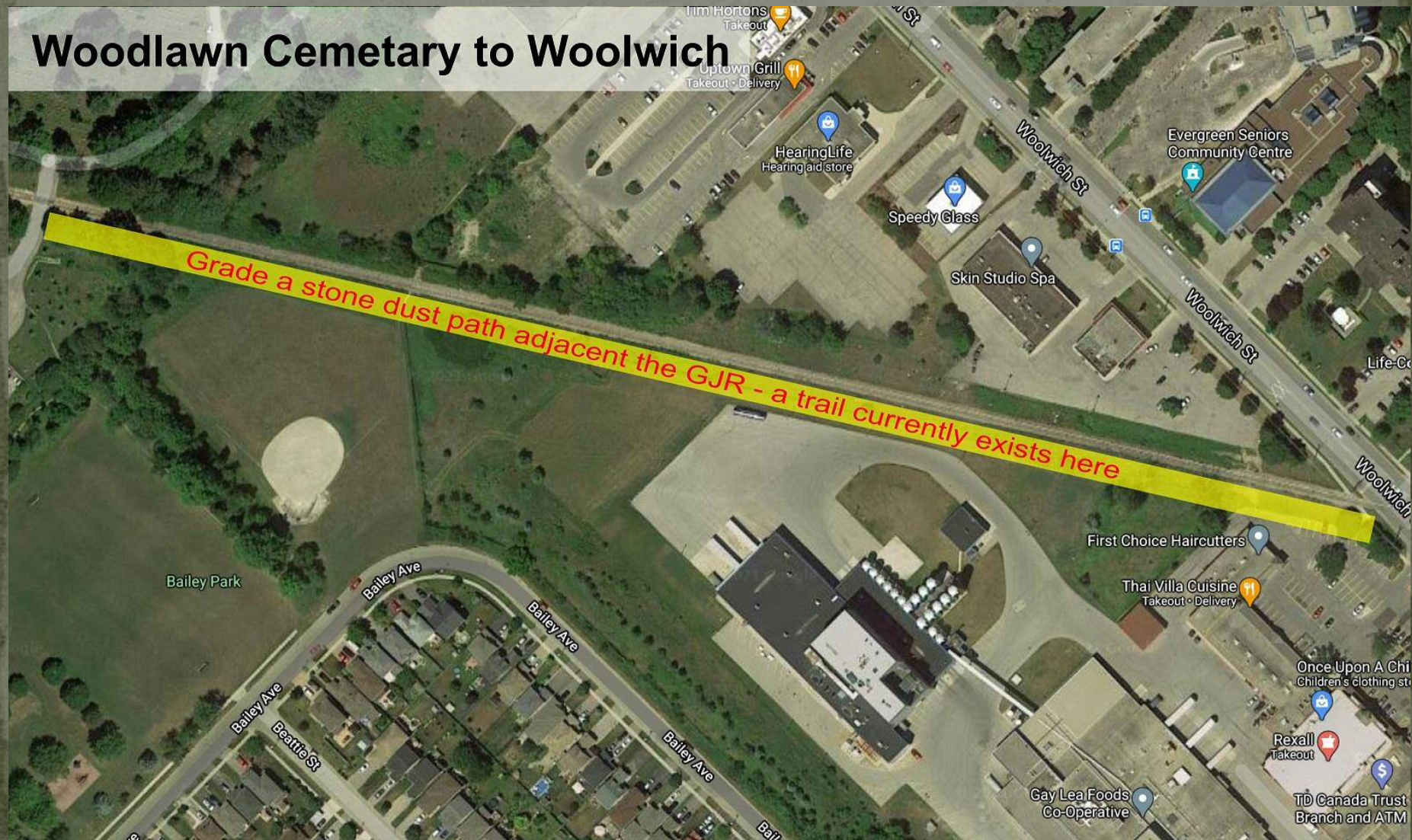




# G2G Route Improvements

Improve the existing rough trail much like the TCT did

## Woodlawn Cemetary to Woolwich



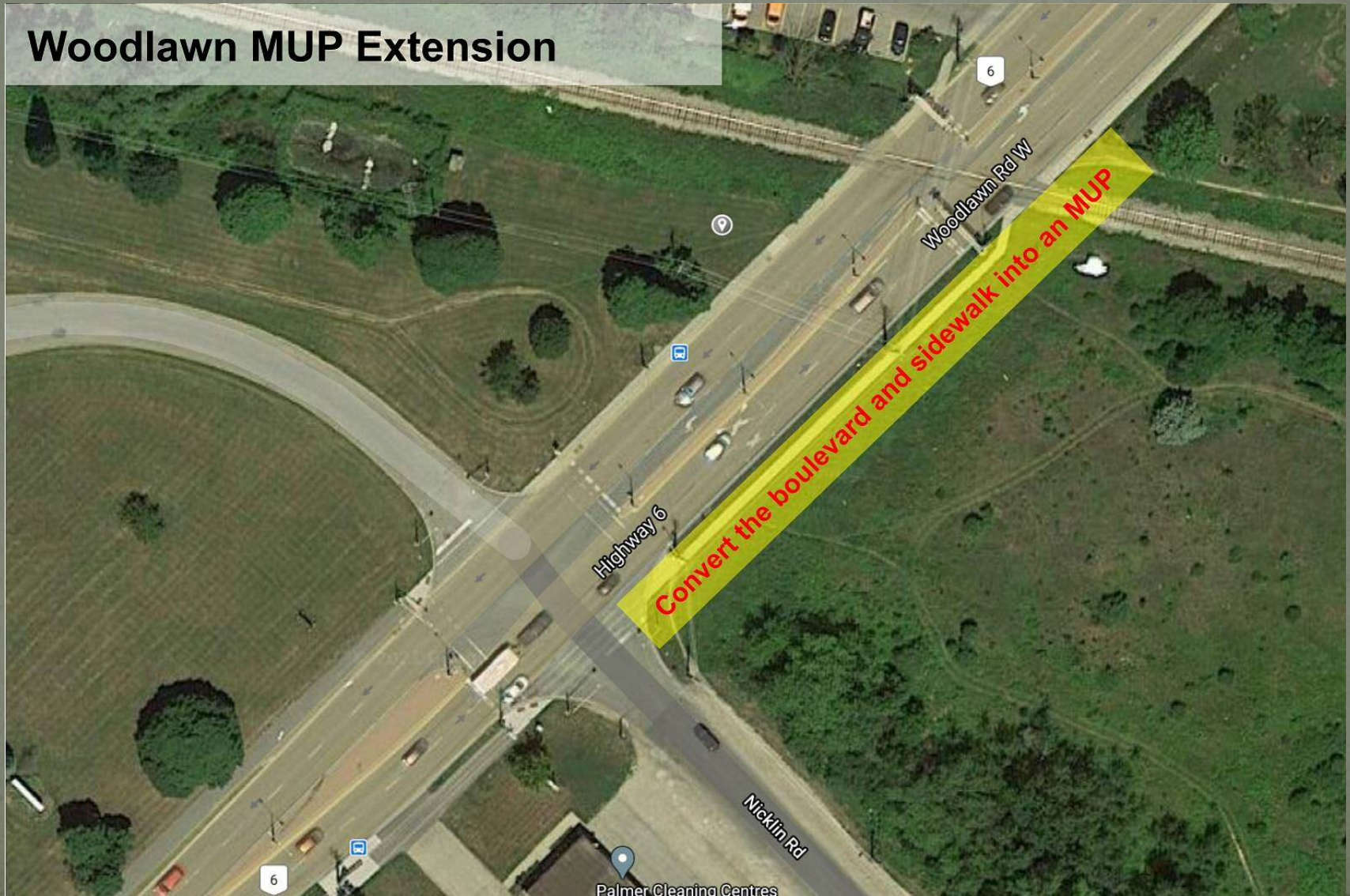




# G2G Route Improvements

Extend the existing MUP to Woodlawn Cemetery

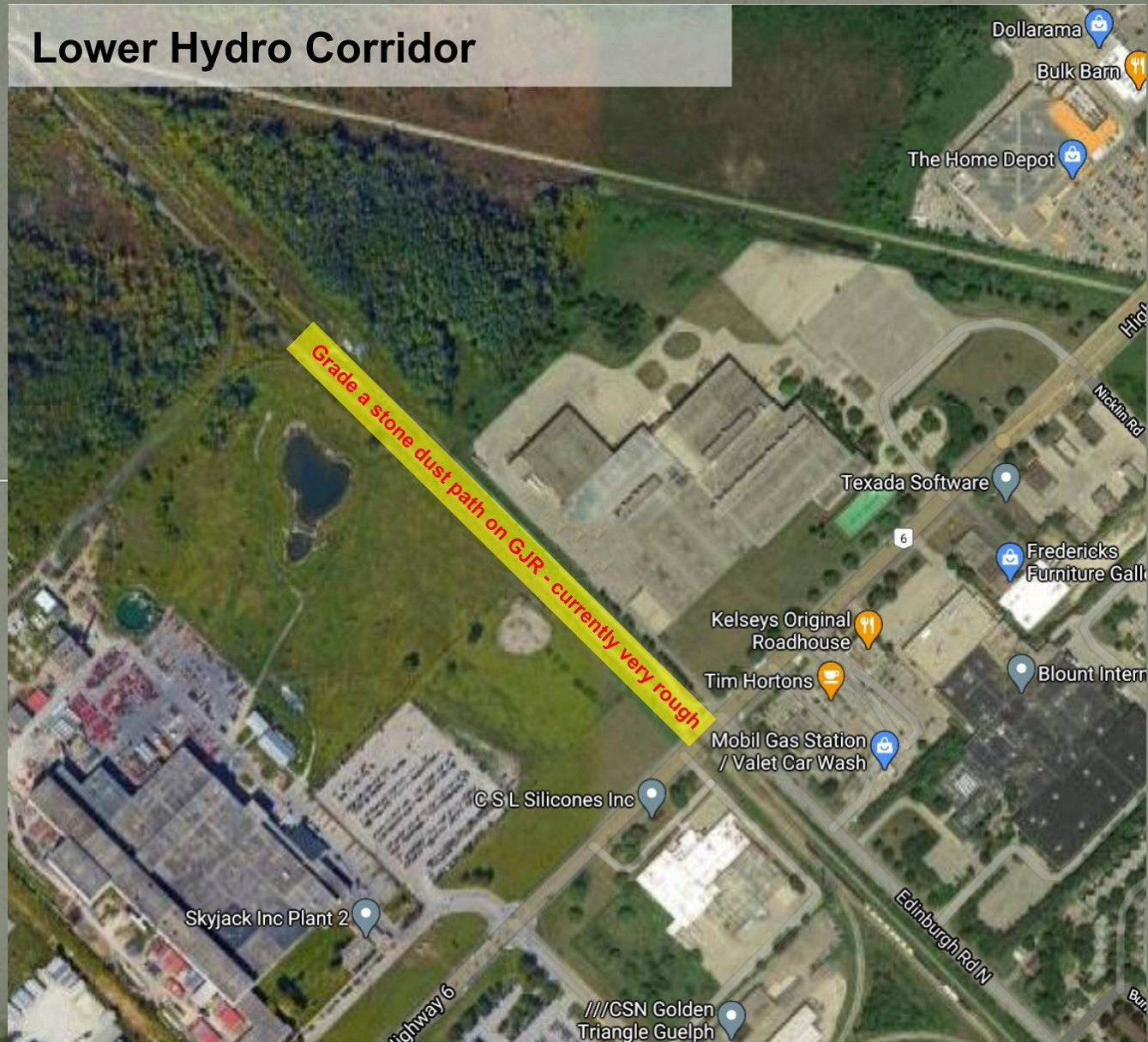
## Woodlawn MUP Extension





# G2G Route Improvements

## Lower Hydro Corridor







# Rail Trails in other Places

---





# Elora, ON







# Fergus, ON







# Kitchener, ON







# Kitchener, ON







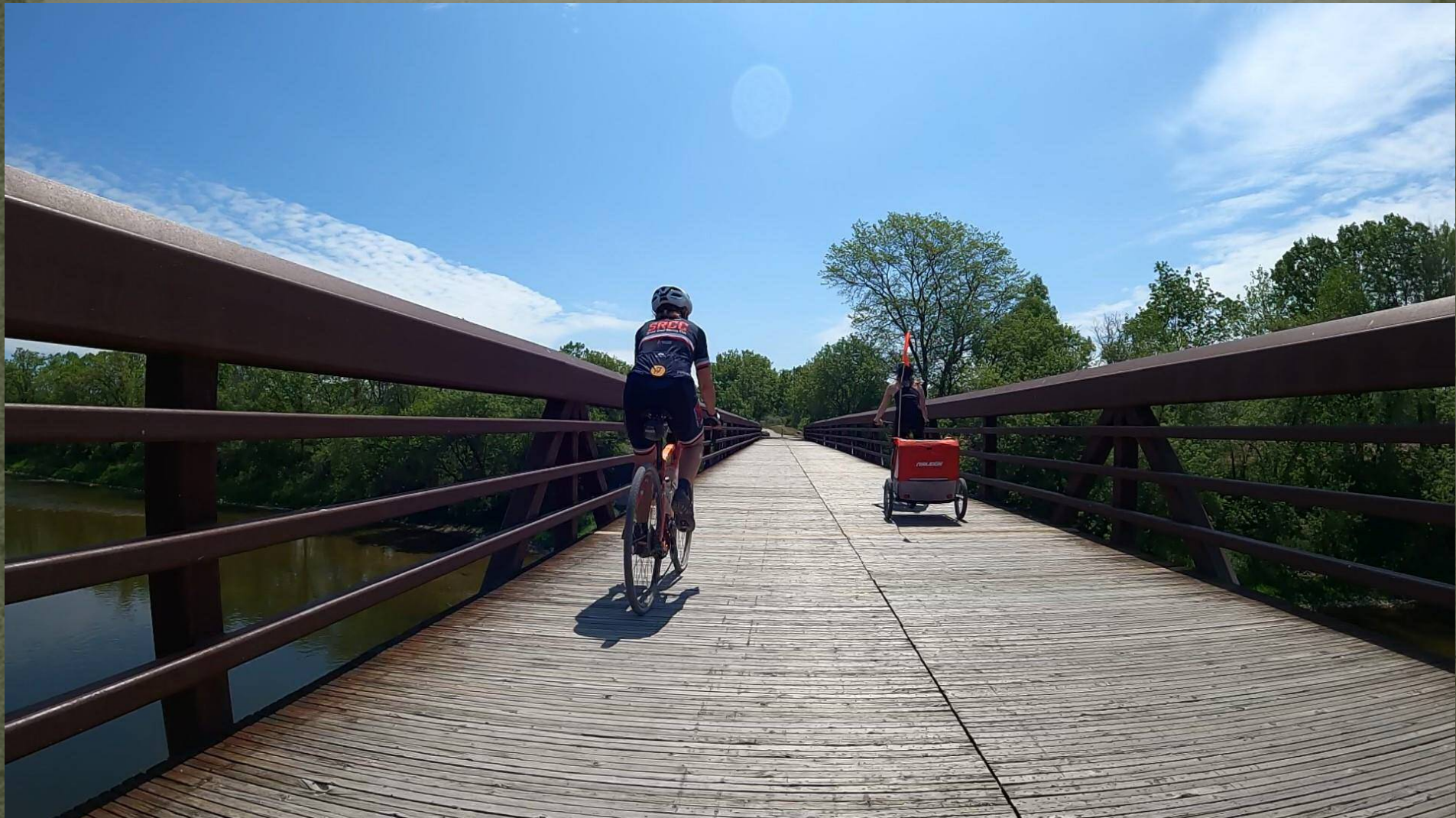
# Brantford, ON







# Brantford, ON







# Caledon, ON







# Peterborough, ON





# Pere Marquette Rail Trail - Michigan



Pere Marquette Rail Trail



# Pere Marquette Rail Trail - Michigan



Pere Marquette Rail Trail





# Pere Marquette Rail Trail - Michigan





# Pere Marquette Rail Trail - Michigan



Pere Marquette Rail Trail



# Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean, QC





# Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean, QC







# Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean, QC







# Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean, QC







# Saguenay – Lac-Saint-Jean, QC





# Eastern Townships, QC







# Eastern Townships, QC







# La Route Verte, QC







# La Route Verte, QC







# Véloroute des Bleuets, QC







# Véloroute des Bleuets, QC







# Véloroute des Bleuets, QC





La Cabotière



Véloroute des Bleuets

• Information  
Véloroute •

1692

PRIX  
2007

RioTinto  
Fier partenaire

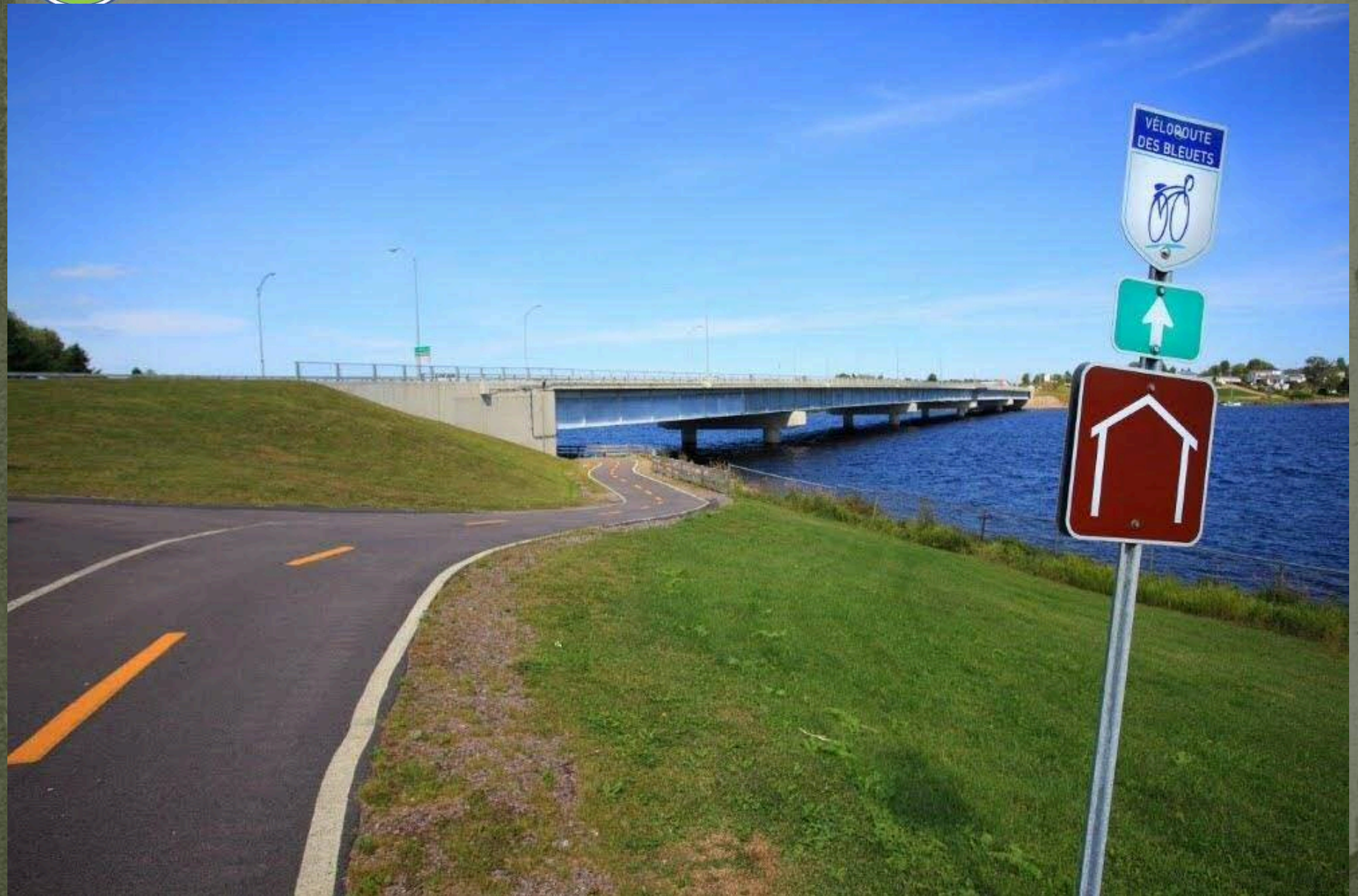
Véloroute  
L'AUTO  
VELO  
BILLETS  
EN VENTE ICI







# Véloroute des Bleuets, QC







# Véloroute des Bleuets, QC







# Véloroute des Bleuets, QC





# **G2G - Guelph Trailway**

**The premier section of the Goderich to Guelph Rail Trail (G2G)**

*GTC - Guelph Trailway Committee*

**April 12, 2020**

## **Economic Impact Research Summary - *Draft***

Preliminary Economic Impact Comparisons for the multiuse  
Guelph Trailway in Guelph and region.

This summary and attached appendix is a draft  
document in progress.



**The Guelph Trailway (GTW)** is the premier section of the Guelph to Goderich Rail Trail (G2G). It begins in Guelph at the covered bridge in York Road Park and follows the Royal Recreation Trail on the bed of the Guelph Junction Railway, past the River Run Centre, up the TCT and to the beginning of the Kissing Bridge Trailway - which is located at Silvercreek Road north of Woodlawn Road just south of Marden Road. All the trail sections of the RCT are not complete and the route, in its current application, makes several detours onto roadways in order to complete its journey to the Kissing Bridge Trail. The goal is to improve and complete the trail sections of the RCT to have a contiguous off road trailway across its entire length.

**Intent of this summary:** To present comparable data from vetted sources to formulate reasonable financial expectations for trailway improvements in Guelph and region similar to those in the compared study areas.

**Disclaimer:** This list is compiled from the initial finding of several days work. By all appearances there are much more data available. Of worthy note, no reports could be found indicating financial losses.

**Currency Comparisons:** All dollar figures are in the currency of their country of origin and are not corrected to present day values.

**Comparing study findings:** The examined studies compiled and reported data differently. The best effort was taken to present this data in a comparable and relative fashion.

**Definitions:**

Trailway: Is a multiuse pathway, often a former rail line consisting of many surface types - hard packed earth, stone dust, light gravel, asphalt pavement.

**Video Explanation:**

Here is a [brief video](#) illustrating Trailways as utilized by cycle tourism and the associated Economic Impacts.

**Findings - Draft**

Initial investigations indicate that a completed well functioning Trailway beginning in Guelph will have significant positive economic impact on the city and region worthy of major capital investment. Depending on various input factors, returns can be quite substantial.

If this initial (Guelph) section of the G2G Trailway is brought to a functioning standard, it will open the entire route to southern Ontario and the Golden Horseshoe. As seen in other examples, this will significantly change the landscape of the communities along the G2G. And as many users will begin in Guelph, parking, meals and accommodation will be the first impacts expressed on the first day of most user's journeys.

[G2G Trail Map with sections](#)

[GTW - Guelph Trailway 2020-04-12](#)

**Studies of the Economic Impact of Rail and Similar Trails**



Published economic impact studies of trails generally incorporate any or all of the following elements:

1. Construction costs as an economic stimulus
2. Tourism spending at trail-oriented and trail-adjacent businesses
  - a. Hard good purchases (bicycle and hiking equipment and clothing, etc), soft good purchases (food and drink, etc), overnight stays
  - b. Jobs created
  - c. Federal and state/provincial taxes
3. Health savings from increased fitness
4. Intangible benefits from improved mental, physical and psychological well-being

In this summary we present data and case studies that primarily focus on tourism spending. We attach an appendix with more detailed notes and additional examples; more can be provided if required.

## **Reference Trailway**

**Name:** G2G - Guelph to Goderich Rail Trail  
**Distance:** 146 km  
**Subsection:** GTW - Guelph City Trailway - Guelph, ON

## **Comparable Study Trailways** – *these are only a few, see appendices for more*

**Name:** [Great Allegheny Passage](#), Pittsburgh PA to Cumberland, MD  
**Distance:** 212 km (132 miles)  
**Year of study:** 2008  
**Source of Study:** The Progress Fund's Trail Town Program, Laurel Highlands Visitors Bureau and the Allegheny Trail Alliance  
**Key findings:** Over **\$40 million** in trail attributed revenue and it was projected that businesses distributed **\$7.5 million in wages annually**.

**Name:** [O&E Canal Towpath Trail](#), Ohio  
**Distance:** 162 km (101 miles)  
**Year of study:** 2017  
**Source of Study:** The Ohio & Erie Canal Trail User Spending Impact Study  
**Key findings:** Highlights from the study included an estimated **222,005 annual users** spending: a) **\$3.7 million on "hard goods"**; b) **\$3 million on lodging**; and c) **\$159,000 on "soft goods"**. Based on the Trail User Spending Impact Study, a **cumulative \$6.9 million was spent by trail users annually**.



**Name:** [Katy Trail, Missouri](#)  
**Distance:** 386 km (240 miles)  
**Year of study:** 2012  
**Source of Study:** Katy Trail Economic Impact Report, commissioned by Missouri State Parks  
**Key findings:** The Katy Trail attracts **400,000 visitors annually** and generates a **total economic impact of over \$18 million**, supporting **367 jobs**. For **every one dollar spent** by Missouri State Parks to operate Katy Trail State Park, Missouri's economy saw **\$18 in return**.

**Name:** [Erie Canal Trail, NY](#)  
**Distance:** 455 km (277 miles)  
**Year of study:** 2012  
**Source of Study:** The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail  
**Key findings:** Overall (including direct and secondary effects), ECT visitor spending generates approximately **\$253 million in sales, 3,440 jobs, \$78 million in labor income** and **\$28.5 million in taxes in the local economy** each year.

**Name:** **Oil Heritage Region Trail network, PA**  
**Distance:** 97 km (60 miles)  
**Year of study:** 2006  
**Source of Study:** Funded by the Oil Region Alliance for Business, Industry & Tourism and Alleghany Valley Trails Assoc.  
**Key findings:** Approximately **160,792 users** frequented the trail system, creating an estimated overall economic impact of **\$4.3 million** in the study year.

**Name:** **Whitefish Trail, MT**  
**Distance:** 68 km (42 miles)  
**Year of study:** 2014  
**Source of Study:** Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC)  
**Key findings:** The 42-mile Whitefish Trail in Whitefish, Montana (pop. 6,357), generates significant economic revenue for the small town and its surrounding area. The trail sees more than **73,000 visitors each year**, with about 70% being locals. Locals who visited the trail spent, on average, twice as much as locals who did not visit the trail in the previous year of the study. All told, **the trail generates nearly \$3.6 million** in spending on accommodations, restaurants, groceries, retail, gas, transportation, licenses and entrance fees, outfitters/guides and farmers markets, in that order, from 22,000 non-resident visitors. This revenue supports **68 jobs and generates \$1.9 million in total economic impact**.



## **Overall estimates, U.S.A.**

*Rails-to-Trails Conservancy* (RTC) has pioneered the use of trail user visitation and spending surveys to accurately assess the value of the U.S. trails tourism economy along destination rail-trails. Using their 15-years-plus dataset of localized trail-spending studies, RTC found **average direct spending at trail-oriented and trail-adjacent businesses of \$5 million to \$7 million and an economic impact of between \$10 million and \$40 million dollars a year**, depending on the length of the trail and number of commercial operations nearby, much of it coming through lodging and food expenditure. Specifically, in 2019, RTC calculated that **the total local spending impact of the nation's (U.S.A.) 2,218 rail-trails is U.S.\$10.6 billion annually (an average of \$4.8 million per trail)**, which could grow to as much as \$21 billion annually.

## **The Great Trail (formerly Trans Canada Trail) in Ontario**

The Guelph Trailway connects to the Kissing Bridge Trail as part of the Guelph-to-Goderich Trail and forms part of a spur line trail to the Great Trail (TCT).

Price Waterhouse Cooper published an Economic Impact Analysis of the TCT Trail in Ontario in 2004. At that time, 2,250 km of the total 4,061 of planned TCT in ON was completed.

The following overview of the economic impact of the TCT in Ontario is taken from their Executive Summary:

Results of the economic impact analysis indicate that Ontario and its 12 Travel Regions are shown to derive significant and real economic impacts from a completed trail. The outcome of the economic impact study indicates that all users' recurrent non-durable good and durable good expenditures, as well as trail maintenance expenditures on an annual basis will result in the following impacts:

- Over **42,000 Ontarians** can attribute their jobs to the Trans Canada Trail in Ontario's recurrent expenditures;
- A total of about **\$2.4 billion** will be generated annually in value added income in the Province of Ontario. Of that, a total of **\$152.8 million** will be sustained by non-local user expenditures (representing "new money" into the economy).
- Total recurrent tax collections will add to about **\$1.04 billion** annually for all levels of government, of which nearly \$140.7 million per year will remain with local governments in Ontario.

Construction of the currently undeveloped portions of the TCT-ON will generate an additional **\$247.5 million** in new income to the province, which supports **3,688 person years** of total provincial employment and combined tax impacts for all three levels of government in the amount of **\$92 million**.

One of the major challenges facing the Trans Canada Trail in Ontario at present is a lack of funds to complete the currently undeveloped sections of Trail. It is interesting to note **that the cost of constructing the currently undeveloped sections of Trail could be recovered in just four years worth of total tax revenue from all three levels of government from the non-local users' non-durable expenditures alone.**



# Appendix

April 12, 2020

## Economic Impact Research Summary for G2G – Guelph Trailway

### Economic Impact of rail and similar trails

#### **O&E Canal Towpath Trail, Ohio**

The Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail is a 101-mile trail in Ohio that is part of a historic corridor designated as a National Heritage Area by Congress in 1996. The Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail: Trail User Spending Impact Study identified the trail as an important economic asset in the region and a critical link in the C2P corridor, part of the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition's (IHTC) 1,500-miles-plus regional trail network vision. The study looked at a snapshot of use and users along the trail at a single location within Cuyahoga Valley National Park in Peninsula, Ohio. Highlights from the study included an estimated 222,005 annual users spending: a)\$3.7 million on “hard goods” (including bikes, clothing, etc.); b)\$3 million on lodging; and c)\$159,000 on “soft goods” (including food, beverages, etc.). Based on the Trail User Spending Impact Study, a cumulative \$6.9 million was spent by trail users annually along the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail—which is just one of many segments along the C2P corridor.

#### **Katy Trail, Missouri**

The 240-mile-long Katy Trail, according to a 2012 Missouri State Parks report, attracts 400,000 visitors annually and generates a total economic impact of over \$18 million, supporting 367 jobs.

For every dollar spent by Missouri State Parks to operate Katy Trail State Park, Missouri's economy saw an \$18 return on investment.

From the report

[https://mostateparks.com/sites/mostateparks/files/Katy\\_Trail\\_Economic\\_Impact\\_Report\\_Final.pdf](https://mostateparks.com/sites/mostateparks/files/Katy_Trail_Economic_Impact_Report_Final.pdf)

According to analysis using Money Generation Model Version 2 (MGM2) economic impact software, the 400,000 annual visitors to Katy Trail State Park have a total economic impact of \$18,491,000 a year, which supports 367 jobs with a total payroll of \$5,128,000. The total value added to the local community from visitor spending is \$8,204,000.

Visitors to the Katy Trail spent, on average, \$45 per person per day/night of their trip. They also spent, on average, \$56.82 per person per day/night of their trip on Katy Trail-related expenses such as bicycles clothing and other trail-related expenses during the past year.

The average party of 3.21 visitors spent \$182.50 total during their visit and \$147.14 per party day. Although nearly three-fourths of Katy Trail visitors were day users, one in four spent the night on or near the trail. On average, visitors traveled 83 miles to reach the Katy Trail – from an average of nine miles for local visitors and 32 miles for nonlocal day visitors to 272 miles for bed and breakfast, hotel and motel visitors.

Day visitors spent an average two hours and 49 minutes in and around the Katy Trail while overnight visitors stayed an average two and a half nights.



Local day user parties (2.07 people per party) spent an average \$18 per trip and \$309 in the past year on bicycles, bicycle supplies, clothing, shoes, and other trail-related expenses. Nonlocal day user parties (2.82 people) spent an average \$56 per trip and \$355 in annual trail-related expenses.

Overnight hotel, motel and B&B visitor parties (3.90 people) spent an average \$700 per trip and \$504 in annual trail-related expenses. Overnight campground visitor parties (7.85 people) spent an average \$231 per trip and \$376 in annual trail-related expenses.

## **Wisconsin**

A state-based analysis of RTC's report, *Active Transportation Transforms America*, found that the net economic impact of trails and active transportation annually in Wisconsin is as much as \$1.5 billion, including direct trail user spending of \$686 million and health costs avoided of \$833 million. This analysis reveals Wisconsin's role in contributing to a national trail and active transportation economy of \$34.1 billion. RTC's report also found that as infrastructure connectivity improves, in part through trail and active-transportation network development like the work underway with the Route of the Badger, the economic contribution of active transportation infrastructure nationwide has the potential to be more than \$138.5 billion each year.

## **Great Allegheny Passage, Pittsburgh PA to Cumberland, MD**

This 150-mile trail runs through nine former industrial towns from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cumberland, Maryland, many of which have a population of just a few thousand people. The trail receives an estimated 940,000 visits per year.

A 2008 study of the Great Allegheny Passage estimated \$40 million in trail-attributed revenue and \$7.5 million in wages distributed by trail-facing businesses. The average day guest spends \$18 and the average overnight guest spends \$124. From 2007 to 2015, trail towns along the Great Allegheny Passage saw a net gain of 65 new businesses, leading to more than 270 jobs created. In 2014, the most recent year for which data is available, an estimated 40% of sales were related to trail traffic.

## **Whitefish Trail, MT**

The 42-mile Whitefish Trail in Whitefish, Montana (pop. 6,357), generates significant economic revenue for the small town and its surrounding area. The trail sees more than 73,000 visitors each year, with about 70% being locals. Locals who visited the trail spent, on average, twice as much as locals who did not visit the trail in the previous year of the study. All told, the trail generates nearly \$3.6 million in spending on accommodations, restaurants, groceries, retail, gas, transportation, licenses and entrance fees, outfitters/guides and farmers markets, in that order, from 22,000 visitors. This revenue supports 68 jobs and generates \$1.9 million in total economic impact.

## **Erie Canal Trail, NY**

2014, *The Economic Impact of the Erie Canalway Trail* (2012)

The 277-mile Erie Canalway Trail in upstate New York sees more than 1.6 million visits each year. Overall (including direct and secondary effects), ECT visitor spending generates approximately \$253 million in sales, 3,440 jobs, \$78 million in labor income and \$28.5 million in taxes in the local economy each year.



### **Razorback Regional Greenway, AK**

An extensive trail system centered around the 36-mile Razorback Regional Greenway. As a result, the impact of bicycling on the economy is estimated at \$137 million annually through local spending, visitor spending and health benefits. Of that amount, \$27 million is attributed to visitor spending through tourism.

### **Salmonberry Trail, OR**

The health-care savings, which—with the increases in exercise brought on by the trail—could amount to an estimated \$400,000 annually, equaling about \$700 per person for residents.

### **Oregon, Scenic bikeways**

The Economic Significance of Cycling on Oregon Scenic Bikeways study was conducted in 2014 and measured a \$12.4 million economic impact from bicycling on Oregon's 14 official Scenic Bikeways. This spending directly supported over 150 jobs with earnings of approximately \$3.4 million.

### **Southwest Trail, AK**

#### Feasibility study

The experience of other, similar trails suggests that about 1,000 out-of-town users per mile per year is a conservative estimate for usage. This represents about 65,000 new visitors. Conservatively estimating \$58 of spending per out-of-town visitor,[10] this translates into an annual \$3 million injection of spending into the local economy, and it is estimated to result in a total economic impact of about \$4.8 million within Garland, Saline, and Pulaski Counties as a result of increased tourism spending, supporting an additional 68 jobs.

Other considerations:

Economic stimulus from construction

Increase in property value leads to increase in property tax revenue

Health Care cost reduction

### **Virginia Creeper Trail, SW VA, 2004**

34 miles. Very rural

\$2.5 million total spending

\$1.2 Million spent directly by nonlocal visitors in the two local counties of Wahington and Grayson, generating \$1.6 million in economic impacts and 28 jobs

### **Swamp Rabbit Trail, SC (Greenville CO)**

\$6.7 Million boost to local economy

### **Silver Comet Trail, GA**

A 2013 study called the Silver Comet Trail Economic Impact Analysis and Planning Study found that in its current form, the Silver Comet Trail (61.5 mi) generates about \$120 million in total expenditures throughout the state each year, supporting about 1,300 jobs and about \$37 million in earnings.



### **Empire State Trail, NY**

#### **Feasibility Study**

According to the state's Empire State Trail Plan, a \$1 investment in trails will yield \$3 in medical benefits.

Current trail spending for the adjoining Hudson Valley Greenway and Erie Canalway Trail (365 miles) is valued at \$21 million per year and \$253 million per year, and those numbers are expected to increase as more connections are create

### **Three Rivers Heritage Trail in Pittsburgh**

A 2014 study of the 24-mile **Three Rivers Heritage Trail in Pittsburgh** recorded more than 600,000 visits by trail users and total user spending in excess of \$8.2 million.

### **Ghost Town Trail, PA**

36 miles, \$1.7 million economic impact in 2009 (very rural). 75,600 visitors

[https://conservationtools.org/library\\_items/1082-Ghost-Town-Trail-2009-User-Survey-and-Economic-Impact-Analysis](https://conservationtools.org/library_items/1082-Ghost-Town-Trail-2009-User-Survey-and-Economic-Impact-Analysis)

### **Oil Heritage Region Trails, PA**

>60 miles (2013)

160,000 trails users, overall economic impact of \$7.48 million (\$6.93 directly into local economy)

### **Lower Rio Grande Valley**

#### **Proposal**

The total construction cost for the six high-priority catalyst projects, including 75 miles of multiuse trails, paddling trails, and bicycle routes, is estimated at \$36.4 million.

#### **Construction Phase: Economic Impact**

During the course of construction of the six catalyst projects, the projects are anticipated to generate \$14 million in labor income and \$5.3 million in local, state and federal taxes, and have an economic impact of \$56 million. Each dollar invested in trail construction will be offset by the economic impact of construction alone, yielding \$1.53 in economic activity within Cameron County.

#### **Construction Phase: Job Creation**

It is estimated that the trail construction portion of this project will lead to 453 Cameron County jobs (and \$14.3 million in labor income). In the 10th year after the trail network opening, it is estimated that non-local visitors will create 554 Cameron County jobs (and \$16.8 million in labor income).

#### **First 10 Years After Completion: Economic Impact**

In the first 10 years, out-of-town visitors associated with the catalyst projects are projected to spend nearly \$367 million in Cameron County. By the 10th year following construction of the six catalyst projects, it is estimated that non-local visitors will spend \$39.6 million in Cameron County, generate \$17 million in labor income, have a total annual economic impact of \$57 million and provide more than \$9 million in local, state and federal taxes.

#### **First 10 Years After Completion: Health Savings**

In addition to economic impact, the projected yearly medical cost savings to residents are estimated to be between \$3,108,653.20 and \$6,492,040.44



**Northern Central Rail Trail, MD**

20 miles (2004)

For 300,000 users, \$3,825,142 spent on hard and soft goods and overnight accommodations. Short trails, so minimal overnight stays and minimal food purchase

**Washington & Old Dominion Trail, VA:**

45 miles (2004)

\$7 million spent directly in northern VA

**Pine Creek Rail Trail, PA**

62.6 miles (2006)

Hard goods: 82% spent an average of \$354

Soft goods: 86% spent an average of \$30

Overnight: 57%

**Heritage Rail Trail, PA**

21 miles (2007)

Hard goods: 85% spent an average of \$367

Soft goods: 72% spent an average of \$13

**Schuylkill River Trail**

Eventually 125 miles, noncompleted (2009)

Economic impact just from purchases of hard and soft goods: \$7.3 million

Hard goods: 78% spent an average of \$406

Soft goods: 50% spent an average of \$9

**La Route Verte, QC**

A 5,300 km network of bicycle designated roads, lanes and multiuse trails

A study found that La Route Verte cyclists spent a total of \$95.4 million in 2000 and estimates brought the impact total to \$134 million by 2006, which corresponds to over \$38 million in government revenues and helps support 2,861 jobs

**Economic Impact of bicycle tourism****U.S.**

The Outdoor Industry Association released a study in 2017, The Outdoor Recreation Economy, which found that bicycling participants spend \$83 billion on 'trip-related' sales (bicycle tourism), and generate \$97 billion in retail spending. Bicycle recreation spending also contributes to the creation of 848,000 jobs.

2012: Outdoor Recreation Economy Report shows that bicycling participants spend \$71 billion per year on "trip related sales," which is the category that best encompasses bicycle tourism. Overall spending for bicycling participants, which includes direct and indirect economic impacts, totals \$198.7 billion, the second highest spending for any outdoor activity.



## **AK**

The Walton Family Foundation, in collaboration with PeopleForBikes, commissioned BBC Research & Consulting (BBC) to conduct a study, Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling in Northwest Arkansas, released in March 2018. Key results from the study include:

Bicycling in Northwest Arkansas provides \$137 million in benefits to the economy annually. Bike tourism is a significant economic driver with tourists spending \$27 million at local businesses each year.

Investment in soft-surface mountain bike trails is a key driver of tourism with at least 55% of mountain bikers traveling to Northwest Arkansas from outside the region.

Bicycling in Northwest Arkansas generates \$85 million annually in health related benefits.

Residents of Northwest Arkansas spend more than \$20 million on bicycling annually.

Houses within .25 miles of the Razorback Greenway sell for an average of nearly \$15,000 more than those two miles from the trail.

## **CO**

A study published in October 2016, Economic and Health Benefits of Bicycling and Walking in Colorado, revealed that the overall health and economic benefits from bicycling contribute \$1.6 billion to the state. Of that \$1.6 billion, the study attributed \$448 million to non-resident tourism spending, and \$74 million to resident tourism spending, with an overall estimated bicycle tourism economic impact of \$522 million.

### **Pikes Peak Region**

The Economic Impact of Cycling in the Pikes Peak Region is a 2015 study commissioned by the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments and shows that 1) bicycling contributes \$28 million per year and 2) bicycle tourism contributes \$23 million per year in direct economic impact to the Pikes Peak region. For each dollar invested in cycling, the Pikes Peak region can yield \$1.80 to \$2.70 in direct economic benefits to the community.

## **FL**

Between 2010-11, an economic impact survey performed on three trails in Orange County Florida estimated 1.7 million people use the trails each year, providing \$32.556 million in economic impact for the county's economy.

## **QC**

A 2014 study by UQAM's Transat Chair in Tourism in Quebec Province shows cycle tourists spend an average \$214 per day.

[https://urbanforestrysouth.org/products/fact-sheets/economic-benefits/the-economic-benefits-of-recreational-trails/index\\_html](https://urbanforestrysouth.org/products/fact-sheets/economic-benefits/the-economic-benefits-of-recreational-trails/index_html)



## **The Economic Benefits of Recreational Trails**

Studies are confirming that trails and green space are important community assets that can help spur economic development. From urban home buyers preferring to live along or near a trail to bicyclists and hikers making their way from town to town in a rural area, trails attract people and dollars.

### **Trails as an Economic Boon**

Tourism and recreation-related revenues from trails and greenways come in several forms. Trails and greenways create opportunities in construction and maintenance, rentals (such as bicycles, kayaks, and canoes), services (such as shuttle buses and guided tours), historic preservation, restaurants, and lodging. Community leaders and planners are now using trails as important parts of overall strategies for economic revitalization and building and strengthening local businesses. • On the Virginia Creeper Trail, a 34-mile trail in southwestern Virginia, locals and nonlocals spend approximately \$2.5 million annually related to their recreation visits. Of this amount, nonlocal visitors spend about \$1.2 million directly into the local economies.<sup>1</sup> • The 45-mile Mon River trail system in Morgantown, West Virginia, is credited by the Convention and Visitors Bureau for revitalizing an entire district of the city, with a reported \$200 million in private investment as a direct result of the trail. <sup>2</sup> • The Florida Department of Environmental Protection Office of Greenways & Trails estimates an economic benefit of \$2.2 million annually from the 16-mile St. Marks Trail.

### **Property Values**

A National Association of Homebuilders study found that trails are the second most important community amenity that potential homeowners cite when choosing a new community. Trails were cited by 57 percent of prospective buyers in a 2004 survey by the association, ahead of public parks and outdoor pools.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, the study found that “trail availability” outranked 16 other options including security, ball fields, golf courses, parks, and access to shopping or business centers. Those home-buyer preferences translate into increased property values and enhanced tax revenue for communities that incorporate trails into planning. In a study on the impact of trails on adjacent property values in Indianapolis, researchers found that the overall impact of trails on property values was estimated at more than \$140 million dollars.<sup>5</sup> Other examples include the following: • In Austin, Texas, increased property values associated with a single greenway were estimated to result in \$13.64 million of new property tax revenue.<sup>6</sup> • The Shepard’s Vineyard housing development in Apex, North Carolina, added \$5,000 to the price of 40 homes adjacent to the regional greenway – and those homes were still the first to sell.<sup>7</sup> • Land adjacent to a greenbelt in Salem, Oregon, was found to be worth about \$1,200 an acre more than land only 1,000 feet away.<sup>8</sup> • In Dallas, developers report that there is a 25% premium for properties adjacent to the Katy Trail.



## References

1. Bowker, J.M., Bergstrom, J.C. and J. Gill, (2004) Virginia Creeper Trail: An analysis of use, economic impacts, visitors' characteristics, and preferences. Virginia Department of Conservation 2. Danzer. R. (2006) "Trails and tourism." Rails to Trails Magazine, Summer 3. Danzer ibid4. National Association of Realtors and National Association of Home Builders. (2002) Consumer's Survey on Smart Choices for Home Buyers5. Lindsey, G., Payton, S., Man, J., and J. Ottensmann. (2003) Public choices and property values: Evidence from greenways in Indianapolis. The Center for Urban Policy and the Environment.6. Nicholls, S. and J Crompton (2005) "The impact of greenways and trails on property values: evidence from Austin, Texas." Journal of Leisure Research 37: 321-3417. Hopey, D. (1999) "Prime location on the trail." Rails-to-Trails Magazine, Fall/Winter 8. Brabec, E. (1992) "On the value of open spaces," Scenic America, Technical Information Series, Vol. 1, No. 2 9. Brown, S. (2006) "Making tracks to the Kay Trail: Urban path is an amenity that developers are rushing to incorporate into plans." Dallas Morning News, December 22

## Resources

American Trails hosts a website at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org) that is a comprehensive online source for information regarding trails and greenways. They also have compiled a list of studies and publications regarding the economics of trails:  
<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/economics/index.html>. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy maintains a website that also has a number of publications related to the economic impacts of trails. The site can be found at <http://www.railstotrails.org/index.html>.