



THE EASTERN ONTARIO RAIL TRAIL LOOP ASSESSMENT

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PRESENTED BY: TERMINUS CONSULTING

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TRAIL DESCRIPTION:

When complete, the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop (The Loop) will be a 360 km Loop that will include portions of the Cataraqui Trail, the K & P Trail and the Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail (OVRT) and will travel through the counties of Frontenac, Lanark and Renfrew, as well as the towns of Smiths Falls, Carleton Place and the Township of Rideau Lakes. The trail takes trail users through the portions of the Canadian Shield, Frontenac Biosphere Reserve and lush farmlands and woodlands of Eastern Ontario.

The entire trail is developed on abandoned rail corridors, and they all extend beyond the borders of The Loop, thus creating strong connections in all directions, therefore opening up the experience to many communities along the trail and outside of The Loop. The various sections of trail are managed by a number of entities, including the Counties of Frontenac, Lanark and Renfrew, as well as the Cataraqui Conservation Authority and the town of Carleton Place.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT:

There is strong potential for The Loop to emerge as a Signature Rail Trail product for Eastern Ontario. While several deficiencies must be addressed to broaden its appeal to a wider range of trail user groups, the current conditions already present immediate opportunities—particularly within the off-road cycling market. This includes mountain bike, fat bike, gravel bike, and hybrid bike users.

The completed segments of the K&P Trail and the Ottawa Valley Rail Trail (OVRT) are in very good condition, making them suitable for mountain and hybrid bikes. The Cataraqui Trail, while less refined, lends itself well to gravel and mountain bike users, particularly those engaged in bikepacking. Although some riders may be deterred by trail conditions, many will not, depending on their equipment and preferences.

Looking ahead, hybrid bike users represent the greatest long-term potential. As the largest segment of the off-road cycling market, they are also more likely to spend at their destination and have experience expectations that align well with other trail user groups. Prioritizing this user group could enhance the overall appeal and accessibility of The Loop, ultimately helping to establish it as a leading recreational asset in the region.

PROFILE OF A CYCLIST*

- 54% women and 46% men
- 61% are between 45 and 64 years old
- 41% stayed 3-4 nights during their visit
- 55% are university graduates and 34% have a family income of more than \$100,000
- 58% have stayed in a hotel or hostel

* Véloroute des Bleuets 2019

MARKET READINESS:

The overall market readiness of The Loop product currently depends on who the market is. For the purpose of this market readiness assessment it will be based on the aspirational goal of developing a product that is marketed to the high-yield hybrid cyclist who typically requires fixed-roof accommodation, access to a diversity of experiences (both on and off the trail), diversity of food options and amenities both on the trail and in the community that cater to cyclists.

Some of the outstanding elements that will need to be addressed include:

- Developing a governance model that supports a long-term collaborative commitment among participating partners. This includes identifying roles and responsibilities of the various partners.
- Developing a consistency standard for the entire trail loop.
This standard would apply to:
 - Trail conditions
 - Regulatory and wayfinding signage
 - Interpretive program and signage
 - Branding of the loop

There will be some segments that will be market ready before other sections, however, a fully market ready trail product will take time. A five-year plan (2025-2030) would be a realistic timeline to elevate the entire product to ensure it meets the expectations of the cycle tourist.

COMPLETION STATUS:

The following scale provides an assessment of how close the entire loop is from becoming a Signature Rail Trail for the hybrid bike market. It takes into consideration time, funding requirements and the overall level of market readiness*.



*Note: This scale has been applied to loop in its entirety and specifically to the hybrid bike market. There are certain segments of trail that would score higher and could be marketed to the appropriate off-road cycling market while the aspirational vision of the loop is being fulfilled.

INTRODUCTION

When complete the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop (The Loop) will be a 360km looped trail through Lanark, Frontenac and Renfrew Counties and will include portions of the Ottawa Valley Recreation Trail (OVRT), The Cataraqui Trail, K&P Frontenac, K&P Renfrew and The Algonquin Trail (also part of the OVRT).

The trail takes trail users through historic communities, fertile farmland, the Frontenac Biosphere Reserve and the Canadian Shield, providing a dynamic natural and cultural landscape that provides tremendous opportunity for interpretation. The trail is made up of abandoned rail corridors that will also provide a rich tapestry of stories that will enrich trail users' experience.

As it currently stands, the 360km Loop would not be considered a signature trail, nor would any of the segments that are complete. Despite the excellent condition of many of the trail sections, the experience needs to be enhanced to meet the expectations of the trail user and there are also sections of trail that will require a considerable amount of work to bring them up to a standard that would be acceptable as a trail tourism product.

This document will highlight both the strengths and weaknesses of the Loop and provide recommendations that will lead to the development of a world class signature trail in Eastern Ontario.

The report provides a general overview of the trail conditions, signage, and the readiness of the communities along the trail to cater to the trail tourist. The recommendations outlined will be prioritized and provide trail managers and other key staff with the guidance required to fulfill them.

TRAIL TOURISM PRODUCT: A DEFINITION

Trail tourism products have the highest tourism and recreation value offering a variety of experiences such as walking, hiking, cycling, snowmobiling and ATViing. They are major regional tourism attractions and are considered economic revenue generators.

A trail tourism product draws people for reasons as diverse and individual as those who use it. Generally, it is set in a distinctive landscape that reflects a region's most distinguishing characteristics such as views, natural features, culture or heritage. A destination trail is often "themed," and elicits a "WOW" factor.

A trail tourism product encourages ease of continuous movement through a potential system of linear, looped and linked pathways that are primarily separated from traffic. Some trail tourism products will be accessible to all, while others will attract a focused market niche. A trail tourism product has high quality standards for design, maintenance and amenities. It has trained and knowledgeable staff and/or volunteers dedicated to the management and maintenance of the trail and its amenities, who provide good quality tourism services.

VALUES AND BENEFITS OF TRAILS

TRAIL TOURISM

- People come from outside of the region to use the trail and spend money in the communities
- Trails are enhanced to reflect the cultural, historical and natural significance of the region
- Cyclists tend to spend \$250-\$300/day
- Trails become the “heart” of the community
- Creates more vibrant and aesthetically pleasing communities
- Creates a sense of pride

ECONOMIC IMPACT

- Creates economic growth
- Grows local businesses and creates jobs
- Compounds the trail’s economic potential: it turns a simple path into a long-term destination
- Improves infrastructure in rural areas and creates active transportation options
- Protects the trail and surrounding nature

HEALTH BENEFITS

- Active trails and greenways create healthy recreation and transportation opportunities by providing people of all ages with attractive, safe, accessible and low- or no-cost places to cycle, walk, hike, jog or skate
- Trails help people of all ages incorporate exercise into their daily routines by connecting them with places they want or need to go to
- Communities that encourage physical activity by making use of the linear corridors can see a significant effect on public health and wellness

CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

- Trails help preserve important natural landscapes, provide needed links between fragmented habitats and offer tremendous opportunities for protecting plant and animal species
- They are useful tools for wetland preservation and the improvement of air and water quality
- They allow humans to experience nature with minimal environmental impact

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- Increased:
 - Sales tax revenue
 - Private and public investment
 - Employment
- Increased property assessment
- Improved community aesthetics and atmosphere
- Attract new residents
- Proven method of revitalizing small communities
- Help build a strong sense of community and pride

THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The field assessment process took place over a two-week period from May 20 to May 29th, 2024. The assessment was conducted by vehicle, by bicycle, on foot and ATV. For the majority of the assessment process the assessor was accompanied by the various trail managers, volunteers and tourism/economic development staff.

The pre-screening assessment and pre-trip review were conducted in advance of the field assessment. This provided the assessor with a strong understanding of the trail management procedures and allowed a review of any supporting documents that would gain further insight into the work that is currently taking place within the region.

It is also important to note that some of these were modified, based on the section of trail being assessed and knowledge gleaned from the trail managers.

- **Pre-screening assessment:** management plan, risk management protocols, liability insurance, trail manager
- **Pre-trip:** This is an assessment of the elements available for the tourist when they are planning their trip such as: website and how to get there (i.e. accurate information to the designated entry points, signage to locate designated entry points, etc.)
- **Sense of Arrival:** this includes ensuring that the tourists have a clear and defined access point for parking and accessing the trail
- **On the Trail:** This includes trail signage and trail conditions and maintenance
- **Trail Design:** This includes assessing the trail route and alignment, conservation, safety and interpretation
- **Trail Experience:** This assesses the overall brand/theme of the trail and how it connects with the tourist and the region as well as the natural features of the trail
- **Trail Town Assessment:** Review of basic tourism services, access to communities, package/itinerary development, transportation, washrooms, garbage/waste disposal
- **Investment Analysis:** This provides an overall understanding of what elements within the trail towns require investment and the priority of the investment, as it relates to ensuring that the “towns” are equipped with the essentials for creating a memorable experience for the trail user.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

STRENGTHS

- Buy-in from the respective counties and key communities along the trail
- A significant portion of the Loop is completed
- Well positioned near Ottawa (airport/train) and Kingston (train)
- Supportive ATV Community
- Enthusiastic business community in some communities
- The diversity of the trail provides interest (lean into it!)
- Unlike traditional rail trail experience, where trail users travel in one direction to the end of the trail and then return back to their starting point on the same trail, looped experience provides trail users with the opportunity to experience a completely unique landscape for the entirety of The Loop.

WEAKNESSES

- The condition of the Cataraqui Trail is poor and could not realistically be promoted as a tourism product, particularly for hybrid or road cyclists.
- The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority's portion of the K&P is in very poor condition.
- Some long stretches of trail lack the WOW factor necessary to capture the interest and imagination of the trail tourist
- Bringing together 3 (4 if the Algonquin Trail is differentiated from the OVRT) different trails with different management plans, signage and approach to working with communities is a challenge
- Roadway connections – particularly the connection from the OVRT to Smiths Falls and the Renfrew K&P into Calabogie is a challenge
- ATV use may dissuade non-motorized users coming from away
- The Trail between Sharbot Lake to Calabogie is 72km long and there is limited cell service and no services
- Some sections of land that will be used for the Frontenac K&P have still not been acquired
- Lack of accommodation options and poor cell reception on the northern portion of the Frontenac K&P needs to be addressed
- Land-use challenges in Calabogie

GENERAL TRAIL ASSESSMENT

The general trail assessment looks at the loop as a whole. This provides a snapshot of the opportunity and the work that is required in order to develop The Loop. The elements assessed in this section may differ slightly than what is assessed on the individual assessments, as they require a greater level of detail.

The purpose of this section is to compare and contrast the various sections in order to see them side by side to appreciate the scale of this project. The assessment is followed by a list of recommendations broken into three specific areas of focus: Governance, Trail Infrastructure and Product.

SENSE OF ARRIVAL

The Loop will have two primary trailheads: Carleton Place and Smiths Falls. Both communities are within close proximity to the two major transportation hubs in the region and have the greatest capacity to service trail users as they prepare for their trail journey on The Loop. There are two additional secondary trailheads located in Sharbot Lake and Renfrew.

PRIMARY TRAILHEAD #1: CARLETON JUNCTION, CARLETON PLACE, ON



Carleton Junction provides a logical location for a primary trailhead along the loop – it embraces the railway theme, is where the trail connects with the Trans Canada Trail, and there is ample parking for cyclists, although there is limited room for vehicles and trailers. It is recommended that trail users transporting motorized vehicles use the Comfort Inn as a staging area, as there is room behind the hotel and a direct link from the hotel to Carleton Junction on the Trans Canada Trail. Carleton Junction provides trail users with access to washroom facilities, a water filling station, a bicycle repair station, and is close to a grocery store and a bicycle shop for any last minute needs.

- This is the designated parking area; however, some business owners find that snowmobilers and ATVers use their parking lot as a staging area, as the actual parking space is not large enough for people to leave their trailers.
- Comfort Inn – There is a Trans Canada Trail connection from the hotel and there is good parking for trailers
- This is a much more secure parking lot, located directly behind the Police Station and is at the intersection of the OVRT and Trans Canada Trail. This is also closer to a water bottle filling station and bathroom and would be large enough for trailers. It currently only allows overnight parking from November to April; however, it is owned by the Town, and they could be approached.



PRIMARY TRAILHEAD #2: LOMBARD STREET, SMITHS FALLS, ON

The town of Smiths Falls manages the first km of the Cataraqui Trail and will be building a new parking lot along the trail in a commercial area on Lombard Street. Due to the fact that this is predominantly a commercial area, and the parking area will be sandwiched between an RV dealership and a car dealership, there will be the need to create a strong sense of arrival that provides a welcoming environment for the trail users.

This would include a highly visible trailhead sign that will ensure trail users can see it amongst the other signage along the road, as well as washroom facilities, water filling stations, a bicycle repair station and possibly some public art and/or interpretive signage.

SIGNAGE

Rather than do an individual assessment of the signage on each trail, this section will provide an overview of the current status of signage and the work that is required in order to create a seamless experience along the trail through trailhead, wayfinding/directional and regulatory signage. Signage is a critical component to a user's experience, particularly from a safety and security perspective.



TRAILHEAD SIGNAGE

Trailhead signage “sets the tone” for the trail users’ experience and provides them with the information needed to have a safe and enjoyable experience. While many people who are doing The Loop have researched the trip and will have a good understanding of what the experience will be, it can’t be taken for granted that everyone has done this. There are a number of critical elements that should be included on trailhead signage. These would include:

- Length of trail
- Trail locator/map
- Activities allowed (iconography is preferred for it to be universal)
- Seasonal information (particularly if there are changes in use or condition or use)
- Safety & contingency information
- Warnings related to wildlife, poisonous plants, etc
- Trail organization & contact information

Additional information that would be valuable to include:

- QR code that will allow trail users to download a map (even if there is mapping on website and/or trail app)
- Identify areas where cell phone service is limited
- Washrooms and water filling stations along the trail (iconography in trail map – these can be added to existing signage)
- Code of Conduct

Existing Trailheads that have been recently updated (Frontenac K&P and Cataraqui Trail) do not need to be replaced at this time. Instead, decals can be added in order to include some of the missing information. It is also important to note that each of the individual trails will continue to retain their own identity, therefore there will not be a requirement to change these trailheads when the product is eventually branded. The Loop branded signage will be added to the trail similar to the integration of the Trans Canada Trail signage.



DIRECTIONAL/WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Directional signage provides the trail users with a sense of security and an understanding that they are on the correct trail. Since The Loop will be made up of multiple trails, directional signage will be critical, particularly at trail junctions where the trails intersect, and the users moves from one trail to another.

A consistent approach to direction signage will be important. As with the Trailhead, directional signage can retain its own identity, however a Loop brand will be essential at decision making points and where other trails (i.e. Tay Havelock) intersect with The Loop and users could easily find themselves on a trail that is not part of The Loop experience.



Below is an example of where the Tay Havelock Trail and the Frontenac K & P in Sharbot Lake intersect. It is currently difficult to distinguish between the two and a user could easily end up on the incorrect trail. Directional arrows and a sign with the Frontenac K&P and The Loop logos would be sufficient, as there is a plan to install a larger trailhead in close proximity to this location.



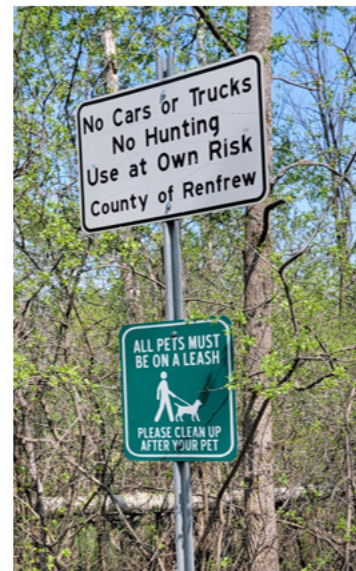
Many of the trails have mile markers installed along the trail in order to assist trail users and they are also used in some jurisdictions to assist search and rescue teams to locate a trail user. With a number of trails connecting to create The Loop, there needs to be consideration on how to address these. This could simply be addressed through information on trailheads or there could be ones developed for The Loop that complement those currently installed. This is not a priority and would be something to address further on in the project.



REGULATORY SIGNAGE

A consistent approach to regulatory signage will be critically important. As part of the project trail managers should adopt a standard approach to regulatory signage, this will provide a uniform experience. An additional consideration trail managers must address is the regulatory signage installed by the ATV Clubs/Federation and the Snowmobile Clubs/Federation. Speed limits and codes of conduct may differ from those of the trail managers. A complete inventory of these signs and agreement with the user groups that are installing additional signage will need to happen in the short to mid-term.

Speed limits and traditional traffic signs are typically placed at trail and road intersections. If there are long sections of trail that do not cross a road or trail intersection additional speed limit signs should be posted along the trail in order to reinforce the message.



As trail users approach communities, there is community corridor signage placed to advise users that they are approaching populated areas, and they must slow down. There could be collaboration between the various trail managers on developing a consistent approach, however it's not critical at this point in the project, as there are already some in place.



TRAIL CONDITION

This section of the report will provide an overview of the overall condition of The Loop as a whole, whereas the trail condition assessments for each of the individual trails will be found in the Individual trail assessment section.

RENFREW COUNTY TRAIL SURFACE



The Renfrew K & P
Trail Surface



The Algonquin Trail
Surface (OVRT)



In order to be a marketable signature trail product, it is important that trail conditions throughout the entire experience are consistent. This will take time, as there is a significant amount of work required to bring the Cataraqui Trail to an acceptable standard for cyclists.

MISSISSIPPI VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY - K&P TRAIL

The Counties of Frontenac, Lanark and Renfrew will be taking possession of the K & P Trail that is currently under the management of the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority. This portion of the trail is in very poor condition, however, if the trail is developed to the standard that all three of these counties currently develop their trails to, there will be no issues with the condition in the future.



TRAIL EXPERIENCE

The trail experience and the communities along the trail are what creates the memories trail users take home with them. Ensuring there are experiences along the trail for ALL users will be essential.

OFF TRAIL EXPERIENCE

There are many long stretches of the trail where there is very little for trail users to see, except for the long trail corridor. This is where it will be important to identify experiences off the trail that trail users can visit and learn more about the region or have a local authentic experience. Some experiences do not need to be too far off the trail, perhaps there are farms along the route that could set up a stand along the trail at peak periods to allow trail users to experience their goods.

Back Forty Artisan Cheese is an example of an experience that is located off the trail; however, through the K&P Business Engagement Program there is now signage to direct trail users to their business.



CULTURAL/HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The region has a rich history that will lend itself well to creating a number of authentic experiences for trail users. The most logical, from a consistency perspective, would be to “lean into” the railway history. There are many areas along the trail that could be excellent opportunities for interpretation, including areas where old railway stations once stood.

Developing partnerships with the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario and the Railway Historical Society in Sharbot Lake and others will provide a richness of information that would be of interest to a wide range of trail users. There are other interesting experiences along the trail, including the lock systems in both Chaffeys Lock and Smiths Falls, part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Rideau Canal. These areas will be a draw for many people who are interested in visiting these protected areas (there are people who travel specifically to visit these sites).





NATURAL SIGNIFICANCE

As noted in the introduction, the trail runs through fertile agricultural lands, the Frontenac Biosphere Reserve and the Canadian Shield. The entire trail is rich in flora and fauna that are of great interest to trail users, particularly those coming for away, who do not have access to unspoiled nature. There are many opportunities to build on natural geographical ecological features like rocky outcrops, marshes, lakes, native plants, snakes, turtles, and swans to create sustainable and environmentally responsible interpretations. Whether it be static interpretive panels or guided tours there are plenty of opportunities to create memorable experiences for trail users.





RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview of Recommendations for the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop to keep in mind throughout the project: Celebrate SUCCESS. As each new trail is upgraded or developed the story needs to continue to be celebrated publicly.

It is recommended that cyclists be the target market for this project, based on the assessment of the various trails that will make up The Loop product. Other than a road bike, the trail conditions should be to a standard that a hybrid or cruiser bike can comfortably cycle. There were a number of factors that contributed to this decision, including:

- The Cataraqui Trail does not allow ATV use on their trail, therefore, there isn't an ATV loop to promote
- Cyclists tend to spend between \$250-\$300/day on multi-day trips
- Developing the trail to a surface appropriate for hybrid cyclists will ensure that the surface is also better able to support people with mobility issues, parents with baby carriages, etc, therefore making it far more accessible for all residents within The Loop region.

RIDE HABITS & PREFERENCES OF ONTARIO CYCLISTS

- Road cycling, followed closely by riding off-road trails (paved and unpaved) are preferred types of cycling (same as 2021), followed by gravel cycling, then mountain biking, with a number mentioning fat biking as other preference.
- 52% prefer a daily ride distance of 46km to 99km, and 32% prefer distances between 21km to 45km, on multi-day trips that include cycling.
- Ontario cyclists frequently ride solo, followed by riding with a group (45%), significant other (38%), and one to two friends (37%).
- 49% ride with a cycling club or regularly organized group.

It is important to note that the cost to maintain a trail to this standard requires an annual commitment of maintenance funds. Funding programs for maintenance costs are not readily available, therefore trail managers must have reliable access to trail maintenance funds. This cannot be an afterthought. Developing a capital funding campaign or business development program can assist in alleviating the burden on the counties, conservation authorities or towns.

The recommendations are listed by priority within each area of topic. Consider breaking the partnership into teams in order to address the various topics (IE. Governance: CAO, Director, Trail Infrastructure: Trail Managers & Product Development: Economic Development, Tourism)

GOVERNANCE

THE LOOP

- Establish a formal partnership agreement and identify any other key partners that will need to be at the table (i.e. Carleton Place is actively promoting cycling, and they are the trail managers for their section).
- Determine roles and responsibilities related to signage, business engagement programs, etc.
- Developing a well-defined strategy and a clearly articulated action plan will be necessary to ensure there is a clear understanding of the work required to achieve the aspirational goal of a market ready product.



CATARAQUI TRAIL

Although these recommendations are specific to the Cataraqui Trail, they have a considerable impact on the overall product, therefore they are included in the general recommendations, as well as being reinforced within the individual trail recommendations and action plan. This will be a significant undertaking and will take time. In order to bring the entire product to market as a bicycle tourism product (as defined earlier in the document), upgrades to the trail will be necessary by 2030.

- Trail management for the Cataraqui Trail must be addressed and new model developed. The current model is not sustainable over the long term, and the current budget does very little in terms of upgrading the trail. There are a number of models that could be considered; this could include transferring responsibility to an entirely different entity or management agreements could be developed between the municipalities and the Conservation Authority. This would allow the municipalities to do maintenance within their communities, and the Conservation Authority would be responsible outside of municipal jurisdictions.
- The Cataraqui Conservation Authority needs to identify a sustainable funding source(s). A couple of options could include leveraging the Friends of the Cataraqui Trail to access funds from foundations (Trans Canada Trail), various levels of government and private donors or a capital campaign could be organized to refurbish the bridges, and naming rights could even be given for the bridges. As part of the of a new management model there could also be contribution agreements developed between the Conservation Authority and the communities to provide funding for portions within the management of the Authority, as a recognition of the value of the trail to the communities in its entirety and not simply their portion of the trail.

SUSTAINABLE TRAIL MANAGEMENT MODEL **SUSTAINABLE FUNDING SOURCE(S)**

SPRING 2026

SPRING 2027

TRAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

- A signage and amenities plan will need to be developed for The Loop project, consistency will be critical to creating a seamless experience.
- Acquisition of the K & P Trail by the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority must be a priority for the three counties and ideally the trail will be developed in coordination. Not only will this ensure a consistent experience but could also result in cost savings through the use of the same contractors.
- Establish a trail maintenance fund to ensure there is an annual source of funds to maintain the trail to a cycling standard.
- The Cataraqui Trail must be upgraded over time to a standard similar to the OVRT and the K&P. This can happen over time; however, it will be very important that trail users are made aware of the trail condition and what kind of bike is best suited for this type of experience.
- Consider establishing partnerships that can assist in developing the amenities along the trail. For example, for long stretches where there are limited or no accommodations an option may be to develop a partnership with Algonquin College through the Heritage Carpentry class to build bunkies or similar structures that can be placed along the trail on private property (to be managed by the landowner). These could be reserved in advance through an online registration system similar to one used by [Parks Canada](#).



PRODUCT

Please note the recommendations are listed based on priority. An infographic with specific timelines will be added to the final report.

- An inventory of “experiences” within a 5km radius should be conducted and cross referenced in relation to access to the trail. It will be important to create experiences that will get trail users off the trail- particularly along sections of the OVRT where there are vast open spaces where you can see down the trails for miles.
- Branding and trail hierarchy will need to be sorted out before a signage plan is developed
NOTE: trail users can be very attached to the identity of their preferred trail -it will be important to socialize the concept of the Loop in a respectful manner and assure residents the trails will not lose their original identity.
- Look for partnership opportunities in communities between Sharbot Lake and Calabogie that would be willing to work with the trail manager to potentially create space in community centres for overnight stays or working with a local community association to prepare bagged lunch opportunities (they would need to be pre-ordered). * County of Frontenac is currently looking at amending by-laws to allow private landowners to erect infrastructure on their properties to support trail users in these remote areas.
- In areas where there is a need to use roads (particularly Calabogie), there may be an opportunity to create a shuttle service that could be pre-booked by cyclists.
- ATV use on the trail may pose a challenge as trail use by cyclists increases – communication will be critical.
- Build stronger relationships with the cycling community- this will primarily be a cycling product.
- As part of the relationship building with the cycling community consider starting to socialize the concept of The Loop with small cycling events, particularly in areas where there are two trail segments that are connected (for example: a three-day cycling event from Carleton Place (OVRT) to Chaffeys Lock (Cataraqui) once the Cataraqui is upgraded. An example that could incorporate the rougher sections of the trail could be like the [Paris to Ancaster Race](#), where rougher routes are sought out.
- Given the railway unites the entire Loop, it is recommended that from a Loop perspective the partnership should lean into the railway theme, however, individual trails can continue to develop their own interpretive programs, based on the unique aspects of their respective trails. See Appendix C for examples of a branding opportunity for a railway theme. This is an [example](#) of railway themed interpretive signage created for the Confederation Trail. This can not only focus on the railway and trains, but how the communities along the trail prospered.
- It would be advisable to set up a search and rescue plan for the trail. This would entail working with local search and rescue teams, the OPP and other first responder organizations.
- An inventory of trails and cycling initiatives should be undertaken to better understand the landscape of trail and cycling opportunities in Eastern Ontario. In particular, a clear understanding of the cycling initiatives such as the Log Drivers Waltz, Cycle MORE, Voyageur Cycling Route, etc. This will help to better understand how to differentiate The Loop from these other initiatives. It is important to note these initiatives are also important economic drivers to the region and are not competition for The Loop product.

INDIVIDUAL TRAIL CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

OTTAWA VALLEY RECREATIONAL TRAIL

CARLETON PLACE TO SMITHS FALLS – 61KM

The OVRT offers a level, stone dust surface or paved trail for cycling, walking, horseback riding, all-terrain vehicles and snowmobiles which makes this year-round trail an attraction in itself. The OVRT connects multiple communities as an ambitious, multi-year project to repurpose a section of the former Canadian Pacific Railway line running 296 kms between Smiths Falls and Mattawa. The section from Carleton Place to Smiths Falls is under the jurisdiction of the County of Lanark, with the town of Carleton Place managing their portion of the trail.

ENTRY POINTS

There are a number of parking areas along the trail that are more likely going to be used by local users, however, they are still important access points particularly for local use.

These include:

Pakenham: 171 Waba Road, maintained parking area, closest to km 52

The parking lot is not located directly in town, but it is relatively close to the village.



ALMONTE: RESERVE STREET, ALMONTE MAINTAINED PARKING AREA, CLOSEST TO KM 38

The parking lot in Almonte is located as the trail users enter town from the south (Carleton Place) on the County of Lanark property. The parking lot is a good size and would be large enough to accommodate trailers and a good number of cars. The local volunteer group (Alameda) could work with the trail managers and the town to improve the parking lot with amenities such as garbage cans, water filling station, improved trailhead signage, public art, etc.



ARNPRIOR: CORNER OF JOHN ST N & WILLIAM ST W IN FRONT OF OPP STATION, UNMAINTAINED PARKING AREA, CLOSEST TO KM 64

This parking lot is along the trail and provides excellent access to town. It is on land owned by Renfrew County; however, it is not currently maintained and does not have any signage to notify trail users that this is a parking lot for the trail. There is a garbage can and bicycle repair station further up in on the trail that should be relocated to this site.



Additional access points:

- 510 Perth Road (County Road 10), maintained parking area, closest to km 13
- 2382 10th Line of Beckwith, maintained parking area, closest to km 24

ON THE TRAIL

NAVIGATION

The trail is fairly straight and easy to navigate. However, more signage is required. Signage is one of the most critical elements of a successful trail project and can become complicated when there are multiple jurisdictions involved with a project. Currently signage on the OVRT is very limited, there are some trailheads located at key access points and wayfinding at road crossings. The Trans Canada Trail Wayfinding signage is also too small to be visible from anything further than 100 metres.



TRAIL DESIGN

- The trail is straight and easy to navigate.
- Ideally some sections would be rerouted to create a more dynamic experience, but this is not realistic.
- Rather than redesigning the trail, the trail will need to provide off-trail experiences along the route for users to enjoy.
- Bollards have been placed on some sections as a design element of the trail to slow motorized vehicles down.
- The trail in Carleton Place is separated for motorized and non-motorized.
- At some of the road crossings (country road), the County has paved approximately 15 feet to prevent damage from motorized vehicles turning up the gravel.

TRAIL CONDITIONS

SURFACE



Section outside of Almonte with an ATV on it. Trail condition is good.

The trail in Carleton Place is separated – motorized users on the gravel and cyclists/walkers on the pavement.

This is a photo of the trail in Blakeney, however, there are quite a few sections like this between Almonte and Smiths Falls. This is quite difficult to cycle on.

AMENITIES

With the exception of the benches located at the Waba Road access point, there are no obvious amenities along the trail outside of the communities. The communities, however, are well positioned along the trail and recommendations are provided in the Trail Town Assessment to improve access to these amenities.

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Well maintained trail surface
- Frequency of communities along the trail is very good

WEAKNESSES

- Trailhead signage is “tired” and needs to be updated
- There is a lack of amenities along the trail
- There are long stretches of trail that lack the “wow” factor necessary for a trail tourism product

CATARAQUI TRAIL

JURISDICTIONAL BREAKDOWN:

Frontenac County: 43.5km from Chaffey's Locks to East and Yarker to the West

Township of Rideau Lakes: Approx. 35.5km to Smiths Falls

Smiths Falls: 1 km

The Cataraqui Trail follows the former Canadian National Railway line from Smiths Falls to Strathcona near Napanee. Therefore, the trail has no steep grades of over 5%. The only exceptions to this are at the Opinicon Road (km 59.1) and Colebrook Road (km 87.8) where the railway overpasses were removed and at km 69 where the trail was detoured up the hill around some cottages.

The trail surface is usually the gravel surface of the old railbed. In many places, an additional layer of crushed stone (granular A-5/8 inch minus) has been added. In 2008 and 2009, stone dust surfacing was placed from Hogan Road (km 66.8) to Boyce Island (km 68.2) and from Yarker (km 88.8) to East Street in Newburg (km 98.4). Approximately 30% of the trail has this stone dust surface so a mountain bike is the best choice for cycling on the trail. The trail is managed by the Cataraqui Conservation Authority (the 1km inside of Smiths Falls is managed by the Town) and the Friends of the Cataraqui Trail managed a bench program along the trail.

ENTRY POINTS

There are a number of well-marked entry points along the trail, with the addition of the aforementioned parking area, there is adequate parking along this section of the Cataraqui Trail. There was a considerable amount of discussion regarding the addition of other parking areas along the trail, however, for the purposes of the Loop project, more parking is not required. New signage was fabricated recently, including trailhead signage.



NAVIGATION

Built on an abandoned rail-line, the Cataraqui Trail is a relatively easy trail to navigate, although it does have a bit more interest with some winding turns, but these are very slight, and trail users can still see down the trail for long distances. There are signs located at road crossings to indicate that trail users are on the trail.



TRAIL CONDITIONS

The 2000 Cataraqui Trail Plan outlines the spatial configuration of the trail:

- Clearing width: 4.3m
- Clearing Height: 3.5 m
- Tread Width: 3.2 km
- Tread Surface: various materials: compacted stone fines, gravel and natural terrain

The assessment of the Cataraqui Trail was not based on whether it followed the original design standards but rather based on the condition and maintenance of the trail. It is, however, worth noting that outside of the sections of the Cataraqui Trail that are built outside of the ROW, they do follow these specifications. The trail is managed by the Cataraqui Conservation Authority and there is also a Friends of the Cataraqui Trail. They have assisted in maintenance activities (particularly vegetation control), and they have contributed financially to signage, trail surfacing, amenities, among other things. They have just started a bench program to increase amenities and they also support and host events on the trail.

It will come as no surprise that the condition of the Cataraqui Trail is not currently at a standard that it could be promoted as a three-season product (spring/summer/fall). The condition of the trail varies considerably from Smiths Falls to Harrowsmith. A significant factor impacting the trail condition, is the fact that the Conservation Authority owns and maintains the trail, and they have a number of priorities (including the trail), but have financial constraints. The Conservation Authority is currently looking at different management models where they can work with other partners/municipalities. There will be a recommendation included, based on models in other jurisdictions.

GATES



The Cataraqui Trail prohibits the use of ATV/Side-by-sides on the trail, therefore they have a barrier at access points, to prohibit access. These need to be opened in the winter in order to allow snowmobiling. Most of these are gates and they appear to be effective, however, they are unsightly (common on many trails) and could possibly be painted to embrace the theme of the trail to make them look aesthetically pleasing and to tie into the branding.

SURFACE

The most significant deficiency of the Cataraqui Trail is the inconsistency of the trail surface. To bring this up to a similar standard as the K&P and OVRT it will require a significant investment, and the Cataraqui Conservation Authority does not have the financial capacity to heavily invest in the project, at the moment, as they rely significantly on other funding sources.

To get a better understanding of the cost to bring it up to a standard appropriate for cycling (it is recommended that on multi-use trails, the surface should be at the standard that is required for the use that requires a higher standard to ensure a quality experience) a complete technical assessment of the trail is required. The gravel surface is difficult for cyclists and the vegetation on the trail also creates some challenges.



Additional comments regarding the trail design:

- It is also worth noting that the trail coming into Sydenham is built on private property (leased) and runs very closely to the houses and cottages in the area. The trail is much narrower in this area and there is a point along the route where a road intersects with the trail, and it is difficult to determine where the user must go. Better signage is required in this area.
- The Opinicon Road section is quite steep. The likelihood of finding an alternate route is low, therefore it is advisable to ensure that users are aware of this.

BRIDGES

The bridges appear to be in good condition; however, there is some damage by snowmobiles. A recent study noted that in order to bring them all up to a better standard, there is an estimated cost of over \$3 million, although many of these structures are not on the Loop. A solution could be to add runners on the bridge to reduce the damage from the tracks on the snowmobile and groomers. A review of the structures is conducted every two years.



AMENITIES

Trail users must travel long distances between amenities, as there is very little on the trail. Having adequate amenities, particularly in areas where there is considerable distances between communities will be important for trail tourists. This does not need to be addressed immediately; however, trail users must be made aware of the lack of amenities in order to plan properly.

BENCHES

Friends of the Cataraqui Trail are exploring placing benches along the trail. They should be strategic in their placement and be consistent in design. The trail is currently littered with a wide range of styles and the condition of some are very poor and are possibly hazards (note the two wooden structures in the photos). The benches on the concrete slab meet AODA standards and something similar should be the standard moving forward.



WASHROOM FACILITIES

There are a few outhouses placed along the trail by the Snowmobile Club and are accessible for all trail users. There will need to be more placed in areas where there are long distances between communities, however, this does not need to be a priority. It is also important to note that servicing and cleaning these pose a modest cost and potential logistical challenges.



NOTE: The Conservation Authority recently passed an asset management plan which includes all major infrastructure assets (bridges). They are developing individual asset schedules for their properties as well which will include a detailed inventory of the assets (trail surfaces, signage, amenities), their condition, and the need to maintain/upgrade them depending on the service level that they wish to achieve.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- There is an established “Friends of” group.
- Newly developed signage has been installed along the trail.
- The town of Smiths Falls will be developing a new access point along the 1km stretch of trail that they manage.

WEAKNESSES

- Trail conditions on the vast majority of the trail is rough and difficult for road or hybrid bicycles
- Some sections of trail near Sydenham are on private land and if that land exchanged hands in the future they could be reverted back to private land.
- There is a very haphazard array of benches along the trail and some are in very poor condition.

FRONTENAC K&P

TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH FRONTENAC TO WILBUR (WHERE THE TOWNSHIP OF NORTH FRONTENAC BORDERS LANARK COUNTY: 90KM

Frontenac County owns and operates the 90 km stretch referred to as the “Frontenac K&P Trail” from KM 21 where the City of Kingston borders with the Township of South Frontenac, to KM 90 near Clarendon Station. In Frontenac County, the K&P Trail is a fully developed stone dust rail-trail with stops in the communities of Sharbot Lake, Godfrey, Verona, and Harrowsmith along the way. The trail supports year-round recreational activities such as cycling, walking, hiking, horseback riding, ATV use*, and snowmobiling.

The County recently rehabilitated 8km between Clarendon Station and the Mississippi River, but there is 12km remaining to be rehabilitated. The trail continues North to Calabogie and Renfrew from that boundary. The trail intersects with the Tay-Havelock Trail in Central Frontenac and the Cataraqui Trail in South Frontenac, and together the three trails form the Trans Canada Trail route through Frontenac County.

*ATV use begins in Verona

ENTRY POINTS

VERONA

The Verona Entry Point has a well-marked trailhead with ample parking for vehicles and trailers. There are also garbage receptacles, benches and a bicycle repair stand. It is located at KM 39 and it is where ATVs gain access to the K&P.



SHARBOT LAKE

The access point in Sharbot Lake is currently by the public beach; however, Frontenac County and the Town are currently in discussions with identify a more appropriate location. This proposed location is where the Tay Havelock and the K&P diverge near the Railway Park. This area will provide greater access to parking and the trailhead signage will ensure that trail users are aware of which trail is the K&P. A full assessment of the site that was provided to town officials is included in the appendices.

ON THE TRAIL

NAVIGATION

The trail is relatively straight and easy to navigate; however, more signage is required. Signage is one of the most critical elements of a successful trail project and can become complicated when there are multiple jurisdictions involved with a project. Currently wayfinding signage on the K&P is limited, it would be advisable to consider placing signage at road crossings, not only will this assist in navigation, but will also increase awareness of the trail. Signage similar to the signage below could be added at key crossings.



BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT SIGNAGE

The business engagement program administered by the County provides great directional signage to the various businesses that are involved in the program.



TRAIL DESIGN

Similar to the OVRT, the K&P is a linear trail experiences where you can see long distances down the trail, however there are some gradual turns that provide some interest. The K&P, however, travels through a more dynamic landscape for the most part and it does provide an interesting trail experience, and, in some areas, there is a beautiful canopy of trees growing. The trail (depending on which direction you are going) travels on a gradual grade upwards (from Harrowsmith north) and can create a bit more of a challenge for unassuming cyclists.



TRAIL CONDITIONS

SURFACE

The surface is a hard packed stone dust and is in very good condition for the majority of the trail, and despite the presence of motorized vehicles, the surface remains a condition that is acceptable to cyclists. There are some signs of water pooling in areas, however, this was shortly after a rainfall and may not necessarily be an issue.

There are, however, some sections of trail that are still undeveloped and will require attention before the entire trail can be promoted as a trail tourism destination, however, if developed to the same standard as the current trail, there should not be an issue with the surface. The K&P developed a Trail Management Plan in 2021, which clearly outlines the standard that must be adhered to.

BRIDGES

The bridges along the trail are in good condition; however, there is evidence of some wear and tear that will need to be addressed in the future. The K&P Frontenac has developed a very good relationship with the local ATV club, and they have recently assisted in the refurbishment of a bridge.



AMENITIES

While there are some amenities along the trail, there is a need for the addition of more, particularly the 72 km between Sharbot Lake and Calabogie. This stretch poses a significant challenge, as there are only small settlements (not even villages) that don't provide any opportunity to establish partnerships with business. Addressing this large stretch of trail without amenities will require some creative solutions, through the creation of some non-traditional partnerships with community or church groups.

BENCHES

The County has installed benches along some sections of trail. They are consistent in design and are strategically placed where trail-users may want to stop and take a break or eat a bagged lunch.



STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Well-developed business engagement program
- Good signage program in place along the trail, including newly developed gate signage
- The trail condition is consistent along the Frontenac portion of the K&P

WEAKNESSES

- The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority portion of the K&P needs a complete upgrade which will require the counties of Lanark, Frontenac and Renfrew to contribute to the development of this section
- There are virtually no accommodation options and services from Harrowsmith to Sharbot Lake and Sharbot Lake to Calabogie
- Cellular reception between Sharbot Lake and Calabogie is non-existent

RENFREW K&P

RENFREW TO CALABOGIE – 22.2KM

The County of Renfrew acquired access to the abandoned rail corridor in 2001 and manages the portion of the trail from Calabogie to Renfrew.

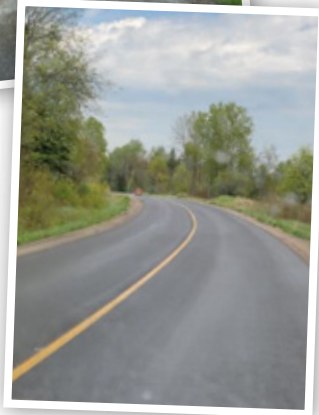
ENTRY POINTS

There are three entry points along the Renfrew portion of the K&P.

RENFREW TRAILHEAD (JUNE STREET)

Algonquin Trail & K&P Recreational Trailhead is located on June Street in Renfrew. This is a large area that could be redesigned to have a clearly identifiable parking area and better directional signage to guide people. At the moment it is confusing.





CALABOGIE

The trailhead is located at Generating Station Lane in Calabogie, however, there is nothing indicating that this is sanctioned parking for the Renfrew K&P. The area needs to be cleaned out with proper signage and parking area in order to instill confidence in the trail user if they were to leave their car at this site.

ADMASTON BROMLEY ON HIGHWAY 132

While there is a clearly identified parking area, this parking area is out of the way and would likely not be used by trail tourists; however, it is good for people who live in this rural area.

NAVIGATION

This trail (like the others) is on a former railbed and is relatively easy to navigate, there is wayfinding signage at each road crossing. There are some instances where there will be the need to improve navigation, in particular, where the trail ends by the golf course and the trail user must take the roadway to get into Calabogie. At the moment there is nothing.

The other area is the trailhead at June Street. As noted in the “Entry Point” section it is very confusing, therefore the signage needs to be improved in order for the trail user to feel safe and secure on the trail.

TRAIL DESIGN

As with the other rail trails, there are long stretches of trail where you can see for very long distances. There are some lovely vistas along the trail, which do provide interest for the trail user; however, it would be advisable to look for opportunities that are within a short distance of the trail that trail users can access and visit.

There is a 6 km gap in the current trail network that requires trail users to use the edge of a relatively busy road with no shoulder. At this point this is the only option, however, there could be opportunities to offer shuttles during peak time, with trail users being picked up at the golf course and transported into Calabogie by independent operators or local accommodation operators.

Another area that is a challenge is the section of “trail” leading up to the golf course. It appears this is an access road for cottagers in the area, there really is very little that could be done from a design perspective, unless the county was willing to build a parallel trail along the route (depending on who owns the ROW).

TRAIL CONDITIONS

SURFACE

The trail surface on the portions that are maintained by the County are very good, similar in condition to the Frontenac K & P and the Lanark portion of the OVRT, but it will need some resurfacing. This work is done in-house, which allows them to do more with less.



BRIDGES

There is significant damage to some of the bridges on the Renfrew portion of the K&P. A full assessment of the conditions should be undertaken in order to better understand the current status and develop a capital investment plan for the bridges in order to ensure that they don't end up in the type of condition in the future.



AMENITIES

There is very little in the line of amenities along the Renfrew K&P; however, 22.2km is a reasonable expectation that most trail users (cyclists and ATVs) will not require many amenities. Significant investment in items such as washrooms or water-filling stations are not necessary in the short term, although there could be some locations that could benefit from some benches or picnic tables.

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- The County has an in-house team that are able to do grading and basic trail maintenance for the trail.
- The County has a full-time trail coordinator on staff.
- The trail surface is fairly consistent along the entirety of the Renfrew portion of the K&P.

WEAKNESSES

- The signage along the trail and access points is limited and in poor condition.
- The gap from the trail to Calabogie is not ideal, particularly for families and inexperienced cyclists.
- The budget for the Renfrew K&P is reduced as trail is being developed, leaving very little for maintenance.
- The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority portion of the K&P needs a complete upgrade which will require the counties of Lanark, Frontenac and Renfrew to contribute to the development of this section.

THE ALGONQUIN TRAIL (OVRT)

RENFREW TO ARNPRIOR – 33.4KM

Renfrew County is responsible for the management, maintenance and construction of the OVRT from Arnprior to Deux-Rivieres (just outside of Mattawa), however, only a portion of it is being used for the Loop.

ENTRY POINTS

RENFREW TRAILHEAD (RIVERVIEW DRIVE)

The Algonquin Trail & K&P Recreational Trailhead is located on June Street in Renfrew. This is a large area that could be redesigned to have a clearly identifiable parking area and better directional signage to guide people. At the moment it is confusing, unless you are a regular user of the trail.



ARNPRIOR TRAILHEAD: CORNER OF JOHN ST N & WILLIAM ST W IN FRONT OF OPP STATION, UNMAINTAINED PARKING AREA, CLOSEST TO KM 64

This parking lot is along the trail and provides excellent access to town. It is on land owned by Renfrew County; however, it is not currently maintained and does not have any signage to notify trail users that this is a parking lot for the trail. There is a garbage can and bicycle repair station further up in on the trail that should be relocated to this site.



TRAIL CONDITIONS

SURFACE

The trail surface on the portions that are maintained by the County are very good, similar to that of the Frontenac K&P and the Lanark portion of the OVRT. The day that we were out doing the assessment a crew from the County was out grading the trail. This work is done in-house, which allows them to do more with less.



AMENITIES

There are no amenities along this portion of the trail, however, it is a relatively short section. Significant investment in items such as washrooms or water-filling stations are not necessary in the short term, however, there could be some locations that could benefit from some benches or picnic tables.

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- The County has an in-house team that are able to do grading and basic trail maintenance for the trail.
- The County has a full-time trail coordinator on staff.
- The trail surface is fairly consistent along the entirety of the Renfrew portion of the Algonquin/OVRT.

WEAKNESSES

- The signage along the trail and access points is limited and in poor condition.
- Confusion between the difference in names (Algonquin and OVRT) and once there is another layer of names it could become even more difficult for users to distinguish between the trails.

TRAIL TOWN ASSESSMENTS

TRAIL TOWNS: A DEFINITION

A trail town is a community through which a trail passes that supports trail users with public services, promotes the trail to its residents and visitors and embraces the trail as a resource to be protected and celebrated. Trail towns are built on a relationship between a town, the trail and its volunteers.

-Adapted from North Country Trail Association's definition

A TRAIL TOWN IS...

- A destination along a trail
- Users can enjoy the scenery, services and heritage
- It has character and charm
- It is a safe place
- It can be easily accessed
- It is a friendly place with warm hospitality
- Linked by a long-distance trail
- Users may be passing through town on a day trip, long distance trek or driving to the community

BENEFITS OF THE TRAIL TOWN PROGRAM TO THE REGION

- Increased sales tax revenue
- Increased private and public investment in the towns and adjacent areas
- Improved aesthetics and atmosphere in the towns
- Increased employment
- Opportunity to leverage the economic potential of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop
- Trail Towns working together multiplies the value and spreads opportunity throughout Eastern Ontario

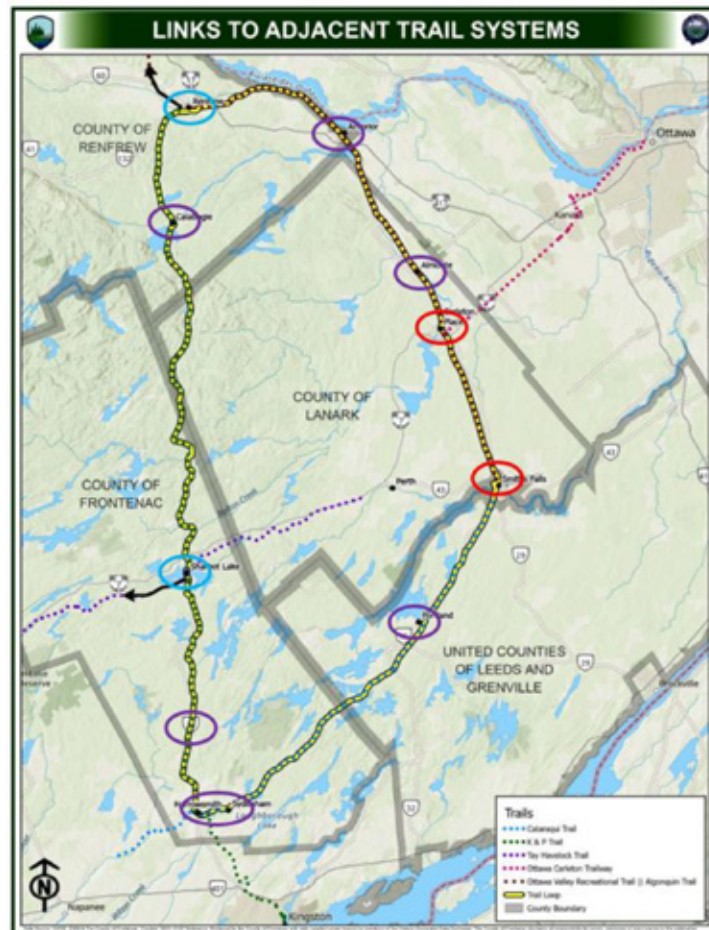
- Increased awareness by locals of what the region has to offer in activities, eating experiences, sightseeing and accommodations
- Increased property assessments
- Stability for existing businesses
- Growth opportunities for existing businesses
- Opportunity to attract new residents
- Proven method of revitalizing small communities
- Increased entrepreneurial opportunities
- Helps build a strong sense of community and pride

TRAIL TOWN BREAKDOWN

Primary Hubs: These are the communities along the trail that provide access to the greatest number of amenities and are connected by trail to transportation hubs.

Secondary Hubs: These are communities that have trail access (Tay Havelock and The Algonquin Trail) have a decent number of amenities.

Overnight/Day Trail Towns: These communities don't offer a lot of amenities but are worth visiting and spending time in them.



Legend

Primary ○ Secondary ○ Trail Town (day or overnight) ○

CARLETON PLACE

Carleton Place has already been working to promote themselves as a cycle friendly community. Cycling is featured prominently in their 2024 Tourism Guide with a two-page spread providing information about cycling in the region and directs readers who want to learn more to the cycling page on their website. The town has bikes available for rent and a public washroom at the Visitor Information Centre. There is also a bike repair station, water filling station and public washrooms at Carleton Junction.

Along with embracing the cycling product, they also have a very historic town and there are a lot of opportunities for visitors to explore and learn about the history of the region. The guided tour provided by the Museum is a great way to learn about the history, however, they also have self-guided tours that people can do at their leisure.



Top left: BIA office
Top right: Carleton Station with public washrooms and water and bike repair station (not seen in this photo, as it was taken prior to their installation)
Bottom left: story about cycling in the 2024 tourism guide

CONNECTION INTO TOWN

The connection from the Trans Canada Trail (from the Comfort Inn) to the OVRT is not very well marked. There is signage in two different locations, and the most recent Trans Canada Trail signage that was installed is far too small. There is also no signage to direct people into town where the Trans Canada Trail meets the OVRT. Once people get on the proper trail section, the trail runs just along the outside of the downtown area. Better signage to direct people to downtown is required. There is a path just before the bridge that could be an access point, however, the trail needs work, as it is quite steep.



BICYCLE-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

Carleton Place already has several Bicycle-Friendly certified businesses. Ontario By Bike has a certification program for business areas, accommodation, (fixed & campground) and food services. There are approximately 10 certified businesses including:

- Black Tartan Kitchen
- Boulton House
- Carambeck Community Centre
- Carleton Place and Beckwith Heritage Museum
- Carleton Place Arena
- Carleton Place Visitor Information Centre
- Downtown Carleton Place BIA
- Stalwart Brewing
- The Good Food Co.
- The Grand Hotel

AMENITIES AND SERVICES

Besides the certified businesses, there are a number of other businesses and services that should be engaged to ensure they are equipped to serve trail users. Carleton Place has a good complement of businesses and services to support trail users including:

ACCOMMODATION

There are two main hotels in Carleton Place. The Comfort Inn and Suites is located outside of downtown, close to the larger big box stores, but is connected to the OVRT by the Trans Canada Trail. The Grand is a smaller boutique hotel located close to the trail and the farmer's market.



BICYCLE SHOPS

Joe Mamma Cycles is located close to the trail at Carleton Junction. They have a small inventory of supplies and there is a bicycle repair station in front of the store. There is also a mobile bike repair service offered in Carleton Place (and Almonte).





FOOD & BEVERAGE

There are two breweries located in town (one directly on the trail and another close), a number of coffee shops, restaurants to suit all trail users and there is an ice cream shop close to the trail as well.



COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

A good way to encourage trail users to stay in town longer is to ensure they are aware of additional experiences that would appeal to them. There are kayak rentals, self-guided art tours, including some ghost paintings on buildings and self-guided historic tours and the Farmers' Market is located directly on the trail.



BICYCLE STORAGE

There are limited bicycle racks in town, let alone a bicycle storage system. Two possible locations to place them would be at Town Hall and at the Post Office. A storage system that allows cyclists to lock them inside a structure would be appealing to high-end cyclists. This could be an opportunity to raise funds for trail organizations, as people could pay to store their bikes in the locker.

There also needs to be more bicycle racks placed throughout the Business Improvement Area. Currently people are using the cages protecting the trees along the street to lock their bikes. Cyclists also prefer to be able to see their bicycles, so racks in visible areas by restaurants and shopping areas will be important.

INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE

There are a number of interpretive signage throughout the community and along the trail. The Carleton Place Museum and the Town are developing new historical interpretive panels.



WASHROOMS

There are a number of public washroom options in the business area of Town. This is sufficient for a town of this size. These include:

- Town Hall Square
- Tourist Centre
- Farmers' Market
- Carleton Junction



STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Tourism officials have embraced cycle tourism and the trail
- Sufficient access to washrooms
- Well situated in proximity to Ottawa – will be a starting point for many trail users
- Carleton Junction is well situated to be the primary trailhead for Carleton Place. It has all of the necessary amenities (and is located in close proximity to a grocery store if people need to pick up any last-minute items).
- The trail within town is separated- cyclists and walkers have a paved surface and the motorized users have a gravel surface. This provides a much nicer cycling experience.

WEAKNESSES

- Trail connection from the Comfort Inn is not well marked
- More bicycle rack and storage lockers in highly visible locations are necessary for the higher end cyclists
- Connection into town from the OVRT is not well marked (this may have changed given the new wayfinding signage installed by the BIA)
- The junction where the TRANS CANADA TRAIL and the OVRT meet needs to be better signed in order for people to know which direction to go in order to be on The Loop.

PAKENHAM

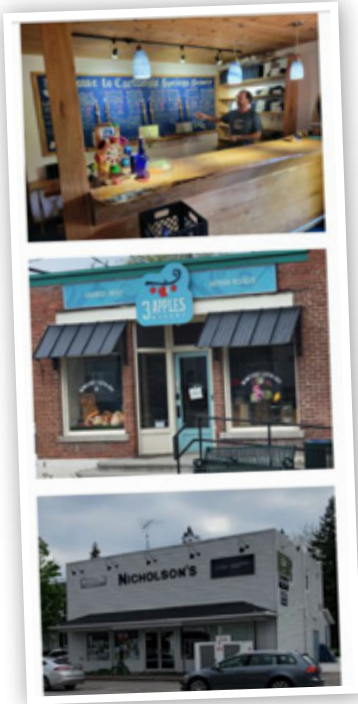
Pakenham is a quaint village located off the trail. There are not a lot of amenities in the community, however, it is a nice place to stop and enjoy the 5 Span Bridge and check out the local shops or enjoy a picnic lunch at the Bridge.

CONNECTION INTO THE VILLAGE

The primary access into town is the Waba Road Access Point. Where they will need to access the road on the side of the road to access the village.

BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES





There are currently three Ontario By Bike certified businesses in Pakenham. Keepers Coffee Bar and Scoops Ice Cream Frozen Yogurt are located in town, while Cartwright Springs Brewery is off the trail, but a great destination for avid cyclists.

AMENITIES AND SERVICES:

ACCOMMODATION

There does not appear to be anything that can easily be searched on Google, however, there may be some privately operated apartments and cottages, but it is not currently an option for people to stay.

BICYCLE SHOPS

There are no bicycle shops in the village, however, the County could install a bicycle repair kit at the Waba Road access area, or perhaps the General Store could be approached to carry some parts for cyclists.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

There are a few shops where people can pick up a simple meal, baked goods and coffee, items for a picnic lunch or enjoy a scoop of ice cream. There is also a brewery, however, it is a bit far from the village, but it is an Ontario by Bike Certified Business (not necessarily geared to the market the loop is focused on, but some may be interested).

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

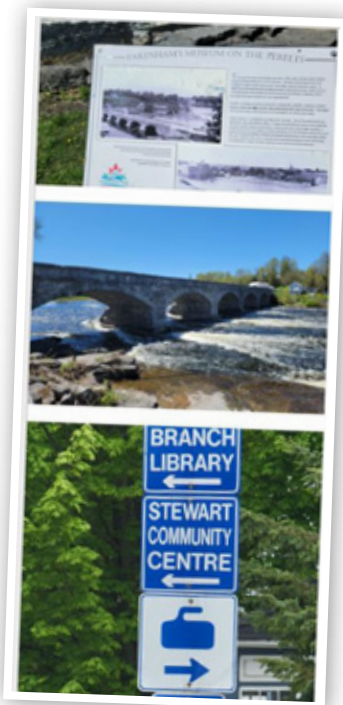
The village is home to two of the seven wonders of Lanark County and is home to the 1840s General Store and Bakery.

BICYCLE STORAGE

There are no bicycle racks in Pakenham, however, the County or the Town could place a rack at the Waba Road access point and there could be another rack at the Stone Bridge “picnic area”. A few standalone racks (such as a keyhole rack) could be placed along the main thoroughfare for anyone who wants to keep an eye on their bicycle, however, it is not essential immediately.

WASHROOMS

The Community Centre and the Library are identified as public washrooms. There does appear to be a porta-potty by the Stone Bridge, however, it has not been confirmed that it is available for public use.



STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Pakenham is home to two of the seven Wonders of Lanark County
- Opportunity to purchase some food and visit a few shops
- Bridge with beautiful views as cyclists approach the village from Carleton Place
- Opportunity to create a picnic site at the bridge

WEAKNESSES

- There is no signage to direct people off the trail and into the village
- There are no bicycle racks or accommodations

ALMONTE

Almonte is a quintessential Trail Town, oozing with charm and located directly along a rail trail. A New York Times article describes Almonte this way; “With its mix of 19th-century buildings and a ‘50s diner, Almonte in Ontario has been the go-to location for holiday movies set in Vermont, Alaska and even Milwaukee”.

Almonte is a perfect spot for trail users to stop and spend time enjoying the local restaurants and shops in the downtown area. Not only does it have a good selection of good restaurants and unique shops, but there is also plenty of history in the Town and a beautiful river walk for people to enjoy the scenery in the region.

CONNECTION TO TOWN

Upon entry to Almonte coming in from the south, there is a 900 m section of trail that is maintained by the County, but is beautified and enhanced through the Alameda project by a visionary volunteer group. The trail is lined with 94 native sugar maples, memorial benches fabricated by a local metal works and a public art project is currently underway. There are also other amenities along the route including bike racks, picnic tables and shelters, outdoor gym equipment and interpretive panels.



BICYCLE-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

The town of Almonte has a number of Ontario By Bike Certified Businesses, including:

- Almonte Bike Works
- The Monte Inn & Lounge
- Equator Coffee Bar
- Mississippi Mills Public Library
- Mississippi Valley Textile Museum
- The Good Food Tour

AMENITIES AND SERVICES

Besides the certified businesses, there are a number of other businesses and services that should be engaged to ensure that they are equipped to serve the trail users.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Almonte has a very limited inventory of accommodation. There are a few Airbnb options in the region and some small inns and Bed & Breakfasts, however, other than that there is nothing available outside of Carleton Place.

BICYCLE SHOPS

There is a bicycle shop near the trail (Almonte Bicycle Works) that has bicycle parts and accessories available for sale and they can do bicycle repairs on site. There is also a mobile bike repair service offered in Almonte (and Carleton Place).

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

There is a good variety of pubs, restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream shops, a local brewery and distillery, as well as fast food and take out. There is more than enough to satisfy a wide variety of trail users.

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

There are a number of museums in the region that would be of interest for trail users, in particular, the Textile Museum and the Geoheritage Park and there are bike rentals available through Almonte Bicycle Works and the Bike Share Program. There are a number of galleries, studios and independent artists in the region and the scenic Riverwalk is an excellent way to see the town. The town also offers walking self-guided walking tours.



BICYCLE STORAGE

There is very little bicycle parking and there is no bicycle storage available in town. The Alameda section has a number of bicycle racks and there is also one placed outside a store just as you are entering town from the South. These are well placed for people who want to get out and walk around Almonte, however, more need to be placed throughout town. These should be placed in highly visible locations to ensure that the trail users are able to keep an eye on their bicycles.

A bicycle storage system should also be installed in town. The Alameda section is a logical location, as the land is owned by the County. It could be painted to become an art installation.



PUBLIC WASHROOMS

There are two public washrooms:

- Town Hall (located by the trail)
- Gemmill Park

The public library is located directly along the trail and may be an option as an additional washroom facility.

SMITHS FALLS

Smiths Falls is a town located along the Rideau River and is part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is home to the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario, and despite the fact that there is a strong railway history in the area, the trail does not run through the community, however, there may be, over time, an option to acquire a corridor. The Town has developed an active transportation network that will assist in connecting the OVRT and the Cataraqui Trail.

CONNECTION INTO TOWN & THROUGH TOWN

Trail users must leave the OVRT at Kelly Jordan Road and travel to Carroll Road and turn left to access town. Better wayfinding is necessary to ensure that trails feel safe and secure.

Note the small Trans Canada Trail wayfinding signage on the road signpost and the other photo is the roadway – there is a grassy shoulder, however there is very little traffic.

Option A: This option provides direct access from the OVRT to the Cataraqui Trail. Trail users turn right onto William St. W and then to Abbott St. N. Trail users will pass by the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario.

Option B: This option would take trail users into town transitioning onto Elmsley St. N and transition onto Beckwith St. N to access the Active Transportation Network. At the Veterans' Memorial Park and navigate across the Locks to access the trail on the other side of the Rideau River where it will take trail users to Abbott Road where the two routes connect.

TRAILHEAD

The town owns the land where the trails connect, a proper rest area and secondary trailhead (primary to go at the new parking lot) sign should be installed. There should also be wayfinding signage (possibly business listings) where the two routes divide.

BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

Smiths Falls already has several Bicycle-Friendly certified businesses. Ontario By Bike has a certification program for business areas, accommodations (fixed & campground) and food services.

- Dave the Bike Mechanic
- The Smiths Falls Heritage House Museum
- Victoria Park Marina and Visitor Centre



AMENITIES AND SERVICES

Besides the certified businesses, there are a number of other businesses and services that should be engaged to ensure that they are equipped to serve the trail users. Smiths Falls has a good complement of businesses and services to support trail users including:

ACCOMMODATION

The two main hotels in Smiths Falls. The Hotel Rideau is a small boutique hotel located in Town, while the Best Western is located near the Cataraqui Trailhead. There are also a number of other options including a unique stay at the Railway Museum of Eastern Ontario in one of their train cars.

BICYCLE SHOPS

Dave the Bike Mechanic appears to be the only bike repair option in town. He can be found on the Ontario By Bike website, although he is only by appointment only. There is also a bicycle repair kit located at the Parkette by Shoppers.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

There is a good number of businesses to ensure that trail users have a good selection of dining opportunities- from fast food to fine dining there is something for everyone.

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

A good way to encourage trail users to stay in town longer is to ensure that they are aware of additional experiences that would appeal to trail users. There are bike & kayak rentals, public art to view, multiple museums, historic walking tours, a number of specialty shops and the Locks.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Close proximity to Kingston via the K&P Trail
- A very good assortment of amenities and services
- Vibrant murals (good for selfie spots)
- The Locks

WEAKNESSES

- Not located directly on the trail
- Signage to directing people into Smiths Falls is not clear
- There is no wayfinding signage to direct trail users through



PORTLAND

Portland is a small village located in Rideau Lakes. The trail does not run through the centre of the village; however, it is easily accessible and provides trail users with a place to stop, rest and grab some food to eat. It has traditionally been a boating community and remains so today, as a result there are amenities available for trail users. There are limited accommodation options in the region to be a true trail town, however it is an excellent stopping point and has the potential to develop more B&B or Inns to cater to trail users.

CONNECTION TO THE VILLAGE

Trail users can directly access the trail at Station Rd and easily make their way into town. There is a bench and trail sign, but it isn't very clear that this is the access into town. A sign with a list of the services could be placed here as well so that users know what they can get in Portland.



BICYCLE-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

There are currently no certified Bicycle-Friendly businesses in Portland.

AMENITIES AND SERVICE

As noted, the village of Portland does not have a lot of amenities and services, but it does provide adequate services for trail users and trail users can also enjoy spending time along Big Rideau Lake.

ACCOMMODATION

There is a bed & breakfast located on Station Street that caters to trail users, there are, however, only two rooms. The Harlem Stonegate B&B is not located directly in the village centre, but could be accessed, and they are a bicycle friendly business. There is also Len's Cove Marina, and it appears that there are 15 cottages, however, they do require a 1 week stay during peak summer season. Portland is approximately 25km from Smiths Falls, for people only interested in travelling a short distance, this would be a good place for additional accommodation. There is a campground and cabins at Otter Lake, however, these are on the Smiths Falls side of the trail.





BICYCLE SHOPS

There are no bicycle shops in Portland, however, a relationship could be struck with the marina to have some tools and parts available if a trail user requires assistance.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

There are a few restaurants in the village that would be sufficient for someone travelling through. These include a few pub-style restaurants, pizza place and chip truck in the core village area and there is a café outside of town (with a pharmacy located next door) that would require the trail user to access it by road on Highway 15, or a trail connection could be made from the trail to the restaurant (depending on landownership).

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

Portland has some opportunities to extend the stay of the trail tourist in the village. The Portland Hanna Memorial Park or Portland Conservation area are beautiful spots to stop and take a rest or enjoy a picnic lunch. There is a local art gallery, heritage centre and boats can be rented at the Marina for as little as eight hours. A little further along on the trail is the Forfar Dairy, which is definitely worth a stop.

BICYCLE STORAGE

There is currently no bicycle storage available in town. Racks could be installed in front of the restaurants and a storage locker could be placed at the Station Road access point.

WASHROOMS

There is a public library located in the village. An agreement could be established where trail users are able to use the washroom.

STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Portland has a small “business area” and will be easily navigable once signage is erected
- Located on Big Rideau Lake
- Storefront opportunities in the village

WEAKNESSES

- Access point to the village needs better signage, directing trail users to Station Street
- Navigation through town needs to be improved
- Lack of public washrooms and accommodations

CHAFFEY'S LOCK

Chaffey's Lock is a cottage and tourist destination located on an isthmus of land between Indian Lake and Opinicon Lake. The Cataraqui Trail runs just above the village and the historic Iron Bridge can be seen from the village centre. The Rideau Canal National Historic Site, seasonal Lockmaster's House Museum, historic fishing lodges and waterfront resorts harkens of years past and will be a favourite of the trail users.

ACCESS TO TOWN

With the trail located above the village, access needs to be developed in order for trail users to safely access the village. There is a "trailhead" located just past the Iron Bridge (on the south end of the trail), however, there is not a clearly delineated trail to get people into the village, there is only a "goat path" that needs to be fully developed.

BICYCLE-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

The Ontario by Bike database does not indicate that there are any certified businesses in the area, however, in searching for accommodation it appears that there may be at least two: Canalview Cottage and Tree Top Glamping Bunkie.

SERVICES AND AMENITIES

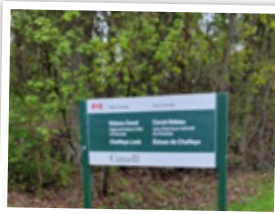
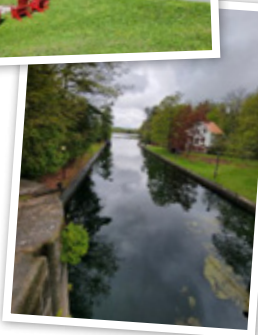
The village of Chaffey's Lock does not have a lot of amenities and services, but they are adequate, and it is a must stop along the trail. The aesthetic of the community, the history and, of course, the Lock makes it a perfect stop for trail users.

ACCOMMODATION

There are not a lot of places for tourists to stay, but there are cabins as well as some AirBnB rentals. This would be sufficient as a start; however, it would be worth discussing opportunities with the owners of the Opinicon to understand if there are any future plans to open it up as a full-service resort. In a review of camping opportunities on Parks Canada land, it does indicate that the Rideau Canal National Historic Site permits camping at lockstations.

BICYCLE SHOPS

There is no bicycle shop located in Chaffey's Lock, however, Brown's Marina may be able to carry some parts for trail users and a bicycle repair station could also be located in the village.





FOOD & BEVERAGE

The only restaurant in Chaffey's Lock is the Opinicon, which opens for the season on Mother's Day and closes after Thanksgiving. The Opinicon has a number of restaurants to choose from and there are many people who make the trip from Sydenham to Chaffey's Lock to enjoy their ice cream. It may be possible to work with Brown's Marina General Store to have sandwiches and other items for picnic lunches available for trail users who can then have lunch along the canal.



COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

Despite the size of Chaffey's Lock, there are many things that trail users can take advantage of and extend their stay. There is a beach for swimming and those that enjoy more active water activities can rent kayak or paddle boards or go fishing. Tourists can take a historic walking tour of Chaffey's Lock, visit the Lockmasters Museum, tour a historic cemetery or simply take the day to enjoy the area.



BICYCLE STORAGE

There is currently no bicycle storage in the village, however there is bicycle rack at the key access point into the village. Installation of bicycle racks strategically placed throughout town would be beneficial, and there is ample space to install bicycle racks or a secure bicycle storage system at the Opinicon.



WASHROOMS

There is a public washroom located at the Lockmaster's House Museum. There may be washrooms available at the community centre- this could be a partnership developed between the Heritage Society (who manages the centre) and the Cataraqui Trail. This could be a fundraising opportunity for both organizations.



STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- The Locks and the Lockmaster's House Museum
- Beautiful setting where Indian Lake meets Opinicon Lake
- Great location for outdoor enthusiasts
- Nicely developed trail entry point with a bicycle rack (but does need work on access trail)

WEAKNESSES

- Does not have the capacity to accommodate a lot of people. With the Opinicon no longer offering overnight accommodation, there is very little to offer. That said Chaffey's Lock would be a highly desirable destination for trail users
- The access trail to Chaffey's Lock has not been developed, however, it should be clearly delineated for the ease of access for the users.
- Limited services and amenities are available; however, this is a location for people to explore the outdoors and learn about the history of the area
- Wayfinding signage within the village

SYDENHAM

Sydenham is a village located in the County of Frontenac and is the seat of the Township of South Frontenac. It is the commercial hub for the area, and it is where the Rideau Trail and Cataraqui Trail intersect.

CONNECTION TO THE TOWN

The Cataraqui Trail runs through the village and trail users can easily access the amenities that the village has to offer. As the trail user enters the village, there is a map placed by a local restaurant to not only indicate where their restaurant is, but also to orient them to where they are in the community. In the absence of a formal business signage program, this was a wise investment by the business, but these types of initiatives need to have regulations put in place. There is also a sign that directs trail users to the various businesses in the community- this needs to be explored further to better understand how this is being administered. This is a possible revenue source.



AMENITIES AND SERVICES

ACCOMMODATION

Other than a handful of AirBnB rentals in the village and along the lake there are very few fixed roof accommodations (there is also Glen-Lor Lodge on the lake where a partnership could be developed to arrange shuttles to the Lodge). Camping is also available at Frontenac Provincial Park for those who are cycling with their gear.

BICYCLE SHOPS

There are no bicycle shops in the area, however there is a garage in town and a Home Hardware that could carry bicycle parts. There is also a bicycle repair station along the trail.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

There are a couple of restaurants, bakeries, coffee & ice cream are available at Trousdale's General Store, and there are grocery stores where people can pick up some food for a picnic lunch.

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

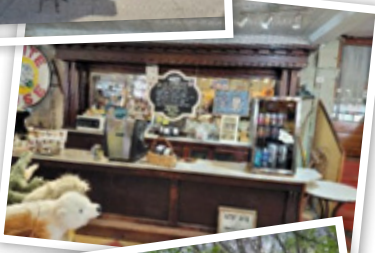
There is not a lot of information available regarding activities that people could do while they are in the village, so this will need to be explored further. That said, there is a public beach, a Conservation Area, provincial park and a few local parks where people could take a break and enjoy the area. There is also a wellness business that could be a potential partner and there is a canoe and kayak outfitter by the provincial park that would be of interest to trail users. The Trousdale General Store has been in operation since 1836 and is well worth a visit.

BICYCLE STORAGE

Upon arrival in Sydenham there are bicycle racks conveniently located at the parking lot of the Foodland and across the street there are bicycle racks and bicycle repair station. There are also bicycle racks by the gazebo at Point Municipal Park.

WASHROOMS

There are public washrooms at Point Municipal Park and there is also a water fountain available for people to refill their water bottles. The Public Library is also centrally located and could be an option for additional washroom facilities.



STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- The trail runs through the community and there are bicycle racks, a bicycle repair station and a secondary trailhead which is installed on a post with wayfinding information for the town.
- There is a nice rest/picnic area by the lake. If outfitters were established in the region, they would benefit from the trail tourists who want to enjoy the beauty of the lake.

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of services and amenities is the challenge for the town, however, with creative partnerships, this could be addressed in the short-term, while longer -term options are developed.

VERONA

Verona is a community located in South Frontenac.

CONNECTION INTO TOWN

The trail runs directly through the community and there is a trailhead located as people enter into town. There is also access into town for a local restaurant, and they are part of the Frontenac K&P business engagement program.



AMENITIES AND SERVICES

There is not a lot to offer to trail users, however, there are some services and amenities in the area that would provide a good stop along the trail for trail users.

ACCOMMODATION

There is not a lot to offer the trail user in terms of accommodation and this is where the lack of accommodation along the K&P Frontenac becomes an issue. There are some options on AirBnB and there is a conservation area and campground north of Verona for those bikepacking, however, there is very little other than that.

BICYCLE SHOPS

There are no bike shops along the trail, however there is a bicycle repair station at the trailhead and there is a unique bicycle rack (which leads to the belief that they are supportive of trail users) at the local food shop, where they may be willing to carry parts.



FOOD & BEVERAGE

As noted above, there is one restaurant on the trail, and there are a few other options as well as a store that carries local food, where people may be able to pick up food for a picnic.



COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

Further investigation is necessary in order to determine whether there are other experiences, as there was very little that could be identified through a desktop review. There does appear to be a Conservation Area south of Verona and it has picnic tables and washrooms facilities, therefore, it may be a good place to spend an afternoon.

BICYCLE STORAGE

There is nothing available in Verona with the exception of the ones at the local food shop. There is, however, a great location in front of Muddy Waters Restaurants, where a couple of parking spots could be replaced with bicycle racks.

WASHROOMS

There were no evident washroom opportunities along the trail, however, there may be a partnership opportunity with the community centre in town.

INTERPRETATION

There is some interpretation at the main trailhead, there are extra panel spaces available where more could be added.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Good entry point with ample parking, bicycle repair station, benches and garbage cans

WEAKNESSES

- With limited accommodation available in the immediate area, it appears that Verona will be a drive through town at the moment, as cycling the distance between Sydenham/Harrowsmith/Verona is a lot for a casual cyclist.

SHARBOT LAKE

Sharbot Lake is an unincorporated community located in the municipality of Central Frontenac in Frontenac County.

CONNECTION INTO TOWN

The Frontenac K&P goes directly through town and provides excellent access to the community. There are discussions underway to identify a Trailhead for the town. There is a complete assessment in Appendix A that was prepared to support a location with adequate parking and will help trail users better identify the appropriate trail – this is one the areas where the K&P and the Tay Havelock intersect (the arrow in the photo). The photo with the ATVs is where the current “trailhead” is located.



SERVICES & AMENITIES

Despite the fact that this is a small community, it punches above its’ weight with respect to offering a services and amenities that are necessary for trail users.

ACCOMMODATION

There is an adequate assortment of places for trail users to stay that are within reasonable proximity to the trail. Rockhill B & B have hosted a number of trail users in the past and there are lodges that are available to rent. There is also a County Inn, however, it does not appear to be open. If trail use were to increase, there may be the opportunity to have this reopened. There also appears to be some cottage rentals on AirBnB.

BIKE SHOPS

There are no bike shops in town, however there is a bicycle repair station that was installed along the trail by the local ATV club and there are a few gas stations on Route 38 as well as a bit of a general store with a lot of items that may include parts for bicycles. Partnerships could be developed with these businesses.



FOOD & BEVERAGE

There are a number of places for trail users to purchase food. From a high-end restaurant with a convenient take-out window on the trail to pub food, café and a grocery store. There are also options on Route 38, however, they are a distance from the trail. Exploration of developing a route from the trail to the brewery on Route 38 has taken place, however, no suitable route has been found.

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

There is a lovely beach located along the trail, the Railway Heritage Park is also located along the trail and the Cardinal Café carries locally made goods. The Farmers Market runs every Saturday from Victoria Day to Thanksgiving Day and it is located along the trail at the beach. There are also a number of independent artists that could be engaged through the Frontenac K&P business engagement program.

BICYCLE STORAGE

There didn't appear to be any bicycle racks along the trail, however, there could be some at the beach. Regardless, there is a need to include more, a highly visible location would be at the beach, however, there could be more added to the new trailhead.

WASHROOMS

There is a public washroom located at the beach directly along the trail. Part of the discussion regarding the new trailhead involved a potential new washroom public washroom facility in the community.

INTERPRETATION

The Railway Heritage Park is located along the trail, which includes interpretation. There are also some interpretive signs along the trail, more of these should be developed.

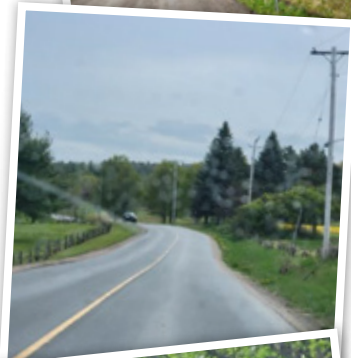
STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Provides some accommodation opportunities, but still requires more
- The Loop can be accessed by the Tay-Havelock trail by people who may be coming to cycle the trail from the Peterborough region
- A local beach with washroom facilities along the trail
- Restaurant and grocery store adjacent to the trail (Opportunity: partnership between Belong and Rockhill B&B to provide a unique culinary experience for trail users).

WEAKNESSES

- The site for the new trailhead/washrooms has not yet been determined
- Access to services and amenities on Route 38 are difficult to access and would enhance the experience if a trail connection could be made
- Parking at the current “trailhead” is limited and there is a health centre/office with a private parking lot in close proximity which could cause problems for any trail users who choose to stay there for long-term parking, thus potentially creating conflict.



CALABOGIE

Calabogie is located along the Madawaska River and is a popular resort area.

CONNECTION INTO TOWN

The connection from the Renfrew section of the K&P into Calabogie poses a significant challenge in creating a cohesive trail experience for the trail user. As trail users approach the community, they run into a couple of issues related to the trail and landowners in the region. There is a portion of the trail that has become an access road for cottagers along the trail route. There is currently a dispute with 26 cottage owners along this route (Appendix B). However, the trail/road is signed as share the road and its condition is similar to a logging road.

Once the trail/road gets to the Calabogie Golf Course, trail users must divert onto a roadway connection into Calabogie. The railway line across the lake was removed and the land portion was taken over by the landowners.

Further exploration is required to determine if there is another way of safely connecting trail users to town. This could include a shuttle (booked in advance and trail users call when they reach the golf course or a water taxi across the lake). The shoulder is virtually non-existent, a conversation with Ministry of Transportation is necessary.

Once the trail user arrives in Calabogie the trail does not go directly through town, however there is a spur path for trail users to access the community. Better signage is required, as it was initially missed on the first time going along this section of the trail.

There is a road crossing where the Renfrew K&P crosses Calabogie Road, this could be developed as an access point with wayfinding signage, as it is the road on which most of the accommodations are located

BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

There are two Ontario By Bike certified businesses; Calabogie Peaks Resort and Canthooks Restaurant located at Calabogie Peaks Resort. There is a tremendous opportunity to further engage businesses whether it be through Ontario by Bike or a county business engagement program (or both).

AMENITIES AND SERVICES

Calabogie is a “resort” town and has a fair number of amenities and services available for trail users. That said, they are not directly off the trail, and it requires trail users to travel on the road to reach some of the amenities and services, particularly accommodations.



ACCOMMODATION

As noted above most of the accommodations are located outside the of “town core” and will require the trail user to access them by road, however, there is a sufficient supply to accommodate trail users. There is a road crossing on the K&P where the trail crossed Calabogie Road, directional signage (perhaps like the business engagement program that Frontenac County uses could be used) is required here, as there is no indication there are any amenities and services off this access point.



BICYCLE SHOP

There are no bicycle shops or bicycle repair stations in town, however, there is a service station (with a small grocery store) not too far from the trail that could possibly sell parts for cyclists. There is also a very supportive business owner (Somewhere Inn), that would likely be willing to install a bicycle repair station on site.



FOOD & BEVERAGE

There are a number of food & beverage options in close proximity to the trail, including a pub, brewery and café, along with a small grocery store. There are more options at the Calabogie Road crossing. Signage will be critical in ensuring that trail users are aware of these options.

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

Calabogie is a great place for trail users who would like to experience other outdoor experiences such as hiking, paddling, hitting the beach, boating and fishing. There is also a motorsport park not far from town and there are also additional experiences like whitewater rafting or exploring the Bonnechere Caves close to Calabogie.

BICYCLE STORAGE

There was nothing evident in the initial assessment, however, there are plenty of locations where bike racks could be installed. Bicycle storage could be installed at some of the accommodations – this would require a partnership; however, it may not require erecting a new structure, it could be an existing shed or another out building.

WASHROOMS

There is a gas station not too far from the trail in town and there is a community centre that has a link into town where partnerships may be developed.

INTERPRETIVE PANELS

There wasn't any obvious interpretation along the trail other than at the "trailhead" where trail users access the trail once they are finished the road link.



STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- There is a good assortment of services and amenities in the community
- There appears to already be support for trail users (motorized) and tourism initiatives (Ride the Highlands parking signs were evident at many businesses)

WEAKNESSES

- Safe access to town is a significant challenge that needs to be addressed and clearly articulated in order to manage the trail users expectations.
- The majority of accommodations are not located on the trail, however, if an access point were created at the Calabogie Road crossing, trail users can easily access these establishments.
- Wayfinding through town is necessary as there are some amenities that are not directly on the trail

RENFREW

Renfrew is a town located on the Bonnechere River and is considered to be a transportation hub connecting Highway 60 and Highway 132 with the Trans-Canada Highway. Did you know that Renfrew is historically known for its role in the formation of the National Hockey League and it makes most of Canada's hockey tape?

CONNECTION TO TOWN

As noted in an earlier section, there is an access point at June Street, however it does require a much better configuration to create a more welcoming space for trail users and as a secondary hub, it needs to provide a sense of security if trail users are leaving vehicles there for a number of days. There are also potential access points that provide access to the downtown core (close to the Renfrew Public Library) as well as one by the tourist centre in the main commercial area close to the "Yellow Caboose" (the trail shown in the picture is not a spur from the Algonquin Trail). Signage clearly directing trail users to services and amenities is necessary in order for trail users to access these services.

This also appears to be an access point for the Millennium Trail at the K&P Renfrew Junction and this will need to be clearly delineated for trail users doing the loop, as they may mistakenly take the Millennium Trail and get lost. There is, however, an opportunity to explore using this trail as a spur for trail users to access other services and amenities, should there be any along the trail that would be of interest to them. This would require good signage and wayfinding.



BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

According to the Ontario By Bike database, the only certified business is Ottawa Valley Coffee.

AMENITIES AND SERVICES

ACCOMMODATION

The town of Renfrew has a full-service hotel and there are a number of AirBnB properties available for rent. As a secondary hub, there is a sufficient supply of accommodations for trail users. NOTE: Reid Kate Resort is located 10km from the K&P and they are promoting the K&P on their [website](#).

BICYCLE SHOPS

There were no identified bicycle shops in town, however, there are a number of big box stores that can provide parts and there are some garages in the downtown core that could service trail users.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

There are a wide variety of restaurants that will appeal to all trail users, however, without adequate signage to direct people to the downtown core, it will require trail users to spend time trying to figure out how to get to these restaurants. It needs to be as easy as possible for trail users to find what they need.

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

There are a number of interesting things for people to do. The McDougall Mill Museum, although not directly on the trail, is close and is a beautiful place for a picnic, there is also public art and quaint shops to explore. There are museums and natural attractions in the region for people to enjoy. Some of these may require transportation, which will need to be addressed, perhaps through a business engagement program.

BICYCLE STORAGE

There was no evidence of bicycle racks or storage in the area. There will be a need, at minimum, to have bicycle racks installed in the downtown area, however, the ideal option would be a combination of bike racks and storage units. This would allow people to spend more time in town to visit and learn more about the area, as there is a good amount of things to see and do.

WASHROOMS

There was no evident access to public washrooms, however, the visitor information centre is in close proximity to the trail (NOTE: it is near the yellow caboose that can be seen in the Connection to Town section, however, an access trail would be required and is recommended.) The Public Library is close to the June Street entry point (that is the building in the picture in the entry point section) and would be a good option.

INTERPRETATION

Although there didn't appear to be any interpretation along the trail, there appears to be some opportunities to celebrate some significant history:

- It was the birthplace of the National Hockey League and home of the Renfrew Millionaires
- Every 25lb shell from Canada in WWI came through Renfrew (presumably by rail) to be filled with cordite explosives at the munitions plant on Hall Street
- Welsh poet W.H. Davies lost his foot riding the rails in Renfrew and mentioned with fondness in his Autobiography of a Super Tramp.
- Renfrew was largely settled due to logging in the early 19th century.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- There is a tremendous opportunity to capitalize on what Renfrew has to offer; however, it doesn't appear that the business community has embraced the potential.
- It appears the Town has paved portions of the Millennium Trail and may be willing to take on maintenance of their portion of the K&P, or assist with enhancements such as benches or interpretive signage.
- The future completion of the Algonquin Trail north will be another access for trail users interested in doing the Loop.

WEAKNESSES

- Lack of visible support for the K&P in Renfrew.
- Directional signage and entry points need to be improved and beautified.
- Lack of a business engagement program. Developing one would be an asset to local businesses and motivate businesses to embrace the trail.

ARNPRIOR

Arnprior is a town located in Renfrew County. The downtown area is designated as a Heritage District and thus has retained its historic appeal.

CONNECTION TO THE TRAIL

Renfrew County owns a parcel of land adjacent to the trail and in close proximity to the downtown area that would be an ideal location to create a welcoming space for trail users to stop and visit the Town. This parcel of land is only a block or two from the downtown area, so it is very easy for trail users to walk into town and leave their bicycle or ATV parked in a secure area. There are also other opportunities that are more visible closer to the downtown area, including a municipally owned parking area. This area is not currently maintained by the county and is not an obvious connection into town. Signage and additional amenities are required.

BICYCLE FRIENDLY BUSINESSES

There are a number of businesses certified by Ontario By Bike, they include:

- MacNamara House B&B
- Negi's Indian Bistro and Pub
- Ottawa Valley Coffee and Market
- Arnprior and District Museum



AMENITIES AND SERVICES

ACCOMMODATION

There are a few hotels/motels in Arnprior that would be suitable for trail users. They are not a four- or five-star accommodation, however, they appear to be clean and reasonably priced. In a search on AirBnB, there does not appear to be many options. As noted above, the MacNamara House B&B is certified and offers four nicely appointed rooms.

BICYCLE SHOPS

There is a bicycle repair mechanic located in Arnprior (The Spokesman) and there is another bicycle repair business (Montu), although neither are a drop-in location and both require booking an appointment. In spite of this, there may be partnership opportunities. For minor repairs there is a bicycle repair station along the trail near Daniel Street; however, it is recommended that this be moved to the parking area to create a true Trailhead experience.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

Downtown Arnprior has a good variety of food and beverage locations for trail users. If trail users are interested in “fast food” options (which is not likely), the commercial area is relatively close to downtown.

COMPLEMENTARY EXPERIENCES

There are a number of antique shops, specialty shops, museums, heritage trails, historic cemeteries and a national historic site in the area for people to visit. There is also beautiful architecture and even a microbrewery and cidery for those interested in learning about the brewing process.

BICYCLE STORAGE

There are a few keyhole bike racks downtown, however, there are some good opportunities to install bicycle racks by the benches downtown. There is also a lot of available space for racks all along the main road. A bicycle storage container could be installed at the entry point on County land. This would allow people who want secure parking an opportunity to store it safely.

WASHROOMS

There are public washrooms located at Robert Simpson Park and McLean Avenue Park; however, they are not in close proximity to the trail. It would be advisable to develop partnerships with the Museum (a bicycle-friendly business) and the public library is in relatively close proximity to the trail.

INTERPRETIVE PANELS

As noted in the complementary experiences, there are a number of opportunities to establish an interpretation program. There was nothing obvious when the assessment was conducted, however, developing a relationship with the Museum and creating physical (or virtual) interpretation for the [Heritage Trail](#) are some opportunities to capitalize on.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

- Similar to Renfrew, there is tremendous opportunity to tap into the services and amenities; however, it appears that the businesses have not yet (they also don't appear to have embraced Ride the Highlands either).
- The Heritage District will be of interest to a segment of the trail users.
- Although they are not bicycle certified businesses. During the assessment process a number of businesses were visited and are supportive of an initiative such as the Loop.

WEAKNESSES

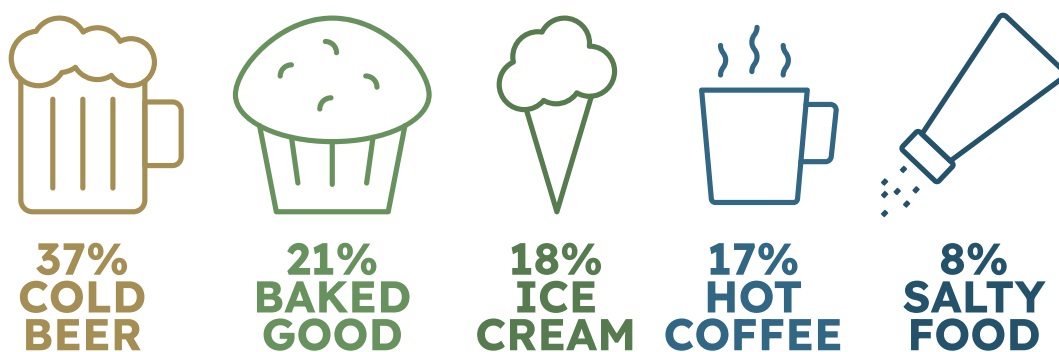
- Lack of visible support for the OVRT/Algonquin Trail in Arnprior.
- Directional signage and entry points need to be improved and beautified.
- Lack of a business engagement program. Developing one would be an asset to local businesses and motivate businesses to embrace the trail.

INVESTMENT ANALYSIS

This investment analysis is not only the investment required to upgrade services and amenities, but also investments of time for staff or businesses in these communities to create exceptional experiences for the trail users and build support within the business sector.

[Ontario By Bike/Transportation Options](#) has been collecting data over the past number of years to compile an annual study that documents cyclists' riding habits and trip preferences, as well as illustrating cycle tourism is growing in Ontario and is having a large impact on the tourism economy in the province.

POST CYCLING TREAT PREFERENCES



Recreation cycling continues to be the most popular type of cycling; however, it is closely followed by cycle touring and events. The two types of cycling styles preferred by cyclists is road cycling and off-road cycling and there is a growing trend towards increased riding distances ranging from 46km to 99km.

Cycling statistics show that:

- 58% of cyclists in Ontario did one overnight trip
- 68% did a three day or longer day trip
- There are over 1689 businesses certified as bicycle friendly by Ontario by Bike
- 47% of cyclists visited one or more of these businesses with accommodation and food and beverage are where cyclists spend the most.
- The age of cyclists is decreasing with more riders under the age of 44
- Most stated that when trip planning, they get recommendations from trusted sources including family and friends, followed by websites and resources published by Ontario By Bike

Impact on Businesses

- Food & Beverage: 55% of cyclists spent over \$26 and 23% spent over \$50 per day in 2021
- Attractions, Entertainment and Other Activities: 30% spent over \$26 per day in 2021
- Retail Shopping: 27% of cyclists spent over \$26 per day in 2021
- Accommodations: 32% of cyclists spent over \$150 per night in 2023

Key Takeaway: Cyclists have increased their spending in all areas since 2018.

In order to ensure The Loop meets the expectations of these cyclists, not only will there be the need to make investments on the trail, but there is also a need to make investments within their communities.

The following investment analysis provides recommendations specific to the entire loop product, two primary Trail Town Hub communities and two secondary Trail Town Hub communities. The smaller trail towns along the route are addressed in this section as well.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ENTIRE LOOP

1. LUGGAGE TRANSPORTATION

There are a number of ways this could be developed.

- **New Business Opportunity**
An individual could create a business shuttling the luggage of trail users from accommodation to accommodation.
- **Accommodation to Accommodation Transport**
This was a concept that was used on the Bruce Trail, where accommodations along the route created a partnership where they would work together to shuttle luggage from accommodation to accommodation and each year one accommodation takes responsibility to book the transport and that each accommodation would be responsible for transporting the luggage.

2. BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Although each trail/county/town will likely be developing their own business engagement signage program, a similar approach to facilitating relationship building can be developed. Consistent messaging about The Loop and the opportunities for businesses should be consistent throughout the network.

A toolkit for business engagement should be developed in order to ensure consistency throughout the Loop.

3. BEAUTIFICATION PROGRAM

Developing a beautification program for the entire loop will not only create an aesthetically pleasing community but will also create a more cohesive experience throughout The Loop. Some potential ideas are:

- Themed light post banners
- Consistent colour theme for planters at businesses that support The Loop.
- Themed public art (i.e. railway theme)

4. ACCOMMODATION INVESTMENT ATTRACTION PROGRAM

Major Gap - Smiths Falls to Calabogie (Cataraqui Trail and Frontenac K&P)

There is a severe shortage of accommodations between Calabogie and Smiths Falls that needs to be addressed in order to truly make this product “market ready”. As it currently stands, the number of trail users will be limited due to the lack of fixed roof accommodation, however, should trail users be willing to camp or stay in alternative accommodation options there would not be as much of an issue. According to the Transportation Options 2023 Ontario Cycle Tourism & Cycling Activity Report only 18% of cyclists prefer camping while 45% of cyclists prefer staying at hotels/motels/luxury accommodations either often or very often.

There will be the need for significant investment of both time and finances.

- Engaging potential investors
- Changes to by-laws
- Meet with community centres, churches, etc. to discuss the possibility of using their facilities in order for groups of trail users to book and stay overnight (this may require the town/counties to purchase cots, etc. for use by the trail users).

5. TRAIL TOWN PROGRAM

There are smaller communities along the trail that stand to benefit from the trail economy, however, there are some general investments that will need to be made in order to create a strong sense of place within them.

1) Conduct an inventory of empty storefronts

These could be potential opportunities for new businesses. Understanding what potential there is for further businesses investment.

2) Wayfinding Signage

Some of the communities along the trail could potentially be missed if the trail user is not made aware of them. Installing wayfinding signage directing people into town will be critical.

3) Bicycle Racks

While secure storage is not critically important, however, bicycle racks in visible locations throughout the downtown core and key access points will be important.

4) Business Diversification

In order to fill in any gaps in services and amenities partnership members should hold discussions with existing businesses to potentially diversify their offerings in order to better meet the needs of the trail users. This could include accommodations setting up a bicycle repair shed on their property, or restaurants offering packed meals that trail users can easily take with them on the trail.

5) Business Networking Events

In order to create the opportunities above, it would be beneficial to create Trail Town business networking events where businesses can network and explore various partnership opportunities.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIMARY TRAIL TOWN HUBS

There are two communities that have been identified as market-ready Primary Trail Town Hubs, including Carleton Place and Smiths Falls. Generally speaking, both Carleton Place and Smiths require similar investments to ensure that they are equipped for trail tourists who are beginning (or ending) their journey on The Loop.

Key considerations for trail hubs include:

- Grocery Store*
- Department Store*
- Banking*
- Bicycle Shop or Sporting Goods store (or a store with a sporting goods section)*
- Secure Long-Term Parking
- Welcoming and well signed

The businesses with the Asterix do not necessarily need to be located directly on the trail or in close proximity (1-2 km from access point) to the trail, as many people will be traveling to the hub by vehicle and can drive to these businesses. However, there will be people who will be arriving by bus or train OR cycling from other destinations (Ottawa, Kingston), and will need access to public transport or a taxi/share ride service.

CARLETON PLACE TRAIL TOWN ASSESSMENT

From a market ready perspective, Carleton Place is the most equipped to become a trail town without having to make a significant investment at the outset. There is a good supply of services and amenities in the community that will appeal to cycle tourists. The Town is very enthusiastic to promote the trail and the cycling product. Encouraging them to develop experiences that will keep tourists in the region longer will also help to stimulate the economy.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CARLETON PLACE

STAGING AREA/LONG-TERM PARKING

A secure place for trail users to park their vehicles for the duration of their trip on the trail is critical. Planning for the longer term and increase of usage of the trail needs to be taken into consideration, as well as the types of vehicles that will be parking in the parking area. For sections of trail that allow motorized vehicles, there will need to be adequate room not only for vehicles, but trailers as well. Other elements that should be considered, but are not necessarily in any specific order include:

- Signage
- Lighting
- Secure garbage receptacles
- Water-filling station
- Washroom facilities
- Picnic tables

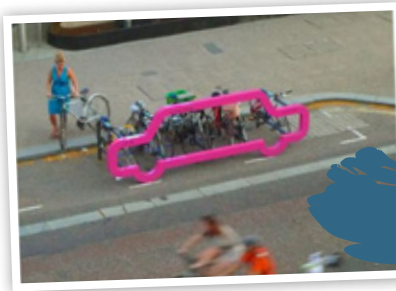
These can be added over time, however, signage is critically important to begin with, as it sets the tone for the experience. While lighting may seem like a “nice to have” and not necessary, it will be important to consider those trail users who are arriving back to their vehicles later in the night or starting out earlier in the morning. Feeling safe and being able to see what they are packing for their experience is important.

IMPROVE SIGNAGE AT KEY COMMUNITY ACCESS POINTS

Improvement to the signage at the two key access points. This should align with the new BIA wayfinding signage (CP) or help to and include a map of the downtown area and where key amenities are located. Creating an opportunity to establish a “pay to play” program for businesses to buy into can offset the costs of the signage.

BICYCLE RACKS

Installation of bicycle racks in strategic locations throughout the BIA or downtown area will be important, not only as a Hub, but also for people traveling through the community while on the trail. Racks with multiple spaces for bikes are recommended as they can accommodate a group cycling together. Ideally these would be placed in high visibility locations to ensure that the cyclists can see them - do not place them behind buildings or in areas that do not have a lot of foot traffic. Depending on the type of rack being used, a regular car parking space can accommodate 6-20, however, 10 is typically the number that is used. This should be considered when determining locations in town.



Bicycle storage lockers are extremely important to cyclists with high-end bikes. They are not comfortable leaving them at a bike rack that they are not able to monitor it, however, a locked storage locker will give them the peace of mind to visit the explore the community without the worry of vandalism.

SMITHS FALLS TRAIL TOWN ASSESSMENT

Similar to Carleton Place, Smiths Falls is relatively well equipped to accommodate the needs of the cycle tourist. The services and amenities offered by the local business community and town are sufficient, however there could be the opportunity to further diversify to offer more services. The biggest deficiency of Smiths Falls is the fact that the trail does not go through town, however, options have been provided and with appropriate signage it should be relatively easy to get trail users into town.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SMITHS FALLS

FABRICATE AND INSTALL SIGNAGE AT TOWN ACCESS POINTS

As trail users enter into town it will be critical to have signage installed to guide people into town. This will be a critical decision point, as trail users can opt to head directly to the Cataragui Trail via William St. West and Abbot or into town via Elmsley St. North and Beckwith St. North.

BICYCLE STORAGE LOCKERS

There are a number of keyhole bicycle racks along Beckwith Street, however there is no secured storage. Bicycle storage lockers are extremely important to cyclists with high-end bikes. They are not comfortable leaving them at a bike rack that they are not able to monitor it, however, a locked storage locker will give them the peace of mind to visit the explore the community without the worry of vandalism. The parkette by Shoppers Drug Mart would be an ideal location for a storage locker and another location could be down by the beach area or visitor information centre (not on Parks Canada land).

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR BOTH CARLETON PLACE AND SMITHS FALLS

OPERATIONAL PRIORITY AND STAFF TIME ALLOCATION

In order to create off-trail experiences it will require an investment of time by town staff, businesses and volunteers to create memorable experiences that would be interest to trail users and encourage them to stay in the area longer.

Some examples of opportunities that could be developed in order to extend the stay of the visit include:

- **Bed & Breakfast + Independent Restaurant + Outfitter**

Guests begin their stay at a local bed & breakfast where they enjoy a healthy, farm-fresh meal. Before heading out for the day, cyclists receive a gourmet bagged lunch prepared with local ingredients. Along the trail, they meet a local outfitter who leads them on a guided kayaking tour of the Mississippi River—combining cycling and paddling into a memorable adventure.

- **Restaurant + Theatre/Storyteller + Museum**

Visitors are treated to a curated dining experience at a high-end local restaurant, featuring products sourced from the region. Following their meal, they embark on an animated historical walk through the community, guided by a local theatre group or storyteller. The evening concludes with a visit to a community museum, enriching their understanding of local culture and heritage.

To make these types of experiences possible, it would be valuable to establish Trail Town Business Networking Events. These gatherings would allow local businesses to connect, exchange ideas, and develop creative partnerships that enhance the visitor experience while strengthening the local economy.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SECONDARY TRAIL TOWN HUBS

SHARBOT LAKE TRAIL TOWN ASSESSMENT

The Village of Sharbot Lake has the potential to become a starting point for many of the trail users coming from communities further east such as Peterborough. Trail users can either travel on Highway 7 by vehicle or use the Tay-Havelock Trail, as it intersects with the Frontenac K&P in Sharbot Lake. It has been identified as a secondary hub, due to the fact that they have a reasonable number of services and amenities to service trail users, and they are the most equipped community along the Frontenac K&P than any of the other communities.

RENFREW TRAIL TOWN ASSESSMENT

Similar to Sharbot Lake, Renfrew has the potential to become a starting point for many of the trail users coming from communities further north like Petawawa or Pembroke. Trail users can either travel on Highway 17 by vehicle or use the Algonquin Trail, which becomes part of The Loop when it reaches Renfrew. It has been identified as a secondary hub, as they have a trail connection reaching north and a good number of services for trail users who require to get supplies prior to heading out to the trail.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARBOT LAKE AND RENFREW

STAGING AREA/LONG TERM PARKING

A secure place for trail users to park their vehicles for the duration of their trip on the trail is critical. Planning for the longer term and the increase of usage of the trail needs to be taken into consideration, as well as the types of vehicles that will be parking in the parking area. For sections of trail that allow motorized vehicles, there will need to be adequate room for not only vehicles, but trailers as well.

Other elements that should be considered, but are not necessarily in any specific order, include:

- Signage
- Lighting
- Secure garbage receptacles
- Water-filling station
- Washroom facilities
- Picnic tables

These can be added over time, however, signage is critically important to begin with, as it sets the tone for the experience. While lighting may seem like a “nice to have” and not necessary, it will be important to consider those trail users who are arriving back at their vehicles later in the night or starting out earlier in the morning. Feeling safe and being able to see what they are packing for their experience is important.

BICYCLE RACKS

Installation of bicycle racks in strategic locations throughout the town or village core will be important, not only as a Hub, but also for people traveling through the community while on the trail. Racks with multiple spaces for bikes are recommended as they can accommodate a group cycling together. Ideally these would be placed in high-visibility locations to ensure that the cyclists can see them - do not place them behind buildings or in areas that do not have a lot of foot traffic.

OPERATIONAL PRIORITY AND STAFF TIME ALLOCATION

In order to create off-trail experiences it will require an investment of time by town staff, businesses and volunteers to create memorable experiences that would be of interest to trail users and encourage them to stay in the area longer.

Some examples of opportunities that could be developed to extend the stay of the visit include:

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To make these types of experiences possible, it would be valuable to establish Trail Town Business Networking Events. These gatherings would allow local businesses to connect, exchange ideas, and develop creative partnerships that enhance the visitor experience while strengthening the local economy.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR RENFREW

1. COMMUNITY WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

In order to capitalize for the economic impact provided by trail users, there will be a need to create a wayfinding program to not only get people from the trail into town, but also within the downtown core.

2. FABRICATE AND INSTALL SIGNAGE AT TOWN ACCESS POINTS

As trail users enter town it will be critical to have signage installed to guide people into town. It is currently confusing for trail users to determine how to get to the downtown core.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR SHARBOT LAKE

1. ACCOMMODATION INVESTMENT ATTRACTION STRATEGY

There is an insufficient number of accommodations along the Frontenac K&P, and although Sharbot Lake has some accommodations, there is still room for more. If trail users were traveling and purely sticking to the Loop route it is more than 136km between Smiths Falls and Sharbot Lake, which is beyond most cyclists' preferences. Sharbot Lake, however, would be an option for trail users who are starting from Kingston (however, in the short-term Kingston is not technically part of The Loop, but could be considered as a spur in the future)..

CONCLUSION

Throughout the life-cycle of The Loop project there may be other opportunities for investment, however, focusing on the opportunities noted above is key to meeting the goal of being fully market ready by 2030.

INDIVIDUAL ACTION PLANS

LANARK COUNTY – OVRT

Both of the plans should be developed over the winter period for execution in the spring. It is recommended to use an existing example of a signage program, the [Great Allegheny Trail Signage Program](#) is a very good example of a comprehensive plan. Appendix E provides some information on the Frontenac K&P engagement program. The format of the OVRT maintenance plan as it stands is good (very similar to the Frontenac K&P), therefore it really only needs to be updated and changed slightly to reflect the current circumstances.

SIGNAGE PLAN

A signage plan that will include signage designs for:

- Primary Trailheads
- Secondary Trailheads
- Mileage Markers
- Wayfinding/Directional Signage
- Business Identity Signage
- Interpretive Signage

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

A business engagement program should provide businesses with a number of levels for them to consider and benefits would be based on the level they buy into. Some things that could be considered:

- Trail signage
- On-line listing
- Collateral (i.e. hard copy maps)

TRAIL MANAGEMENT PLAN

A trail management plan that would include, but is not limited to:

- Maintenance standards
- Trail policies
- Regulatory signage requirements,
- Risk management
- Capital investment plan.

RENFREW COUNTY

– K&P AND ALGONQUIN (OVRT)

All of these programs/plans should be developed over the winter period for execution in the spring. It is recommended to use an existing example of a signage program, the [Great Allegheny Trail Signage Program](#) is a very good example of a comprehensive plan. Appendix E provides some information on the Frontenac K&P engagement program. The format of the OVRT maintenance plan as it stands is good (very similar to the Frontenac K&P), therefore it really only needs to be updated and changed slightly to reflect the current circumstances.

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- Maintenance standards
- Trail policies
- Regulatory signage requirements,
- Risk management
- Capital investment plan.

CATARAQUI CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

– THE CATARAQUI TRAIL

The focus of the Cataraqui Conservation Authority should be on the development of a new management model and having a full trail inspection with costing in order to better understand the long-term needs and costs of the trail. This will allow the Conservation Authority to prioritize the work that is necessary to ensure a safe and secure plan. Based on the discussion at the November 13 workshop, it appears that there is an understanding of the cost for the refurbishment of the bridges and culverts, therefore this may not require an outside consultant if these costs are already known. Until a full costing is completed (including annual maintenance costs) engagement with potential trail managers should not happen. However, exploring different management models could happen in parallel with the development of a trail enhancement plan.

TRAIL INSPECTION

- Trail Enhancement Plan
- Maintenance Plan

TRAIL MANAGEMENT MODEL

An exploration of other long-distance management models is recommended. Some examples include:

- Iron Horse Trail
- P'tit Train Du Nord
- Veloroute de la Peninsule Acadienne
- Veloroute des Bleuets

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The township of Rideau Lakes should focus on the development of a business engagement program. As with Renfrew and Lanark counties, using the example of the Frontenac K&P as a jumping off point will be helpful. Elements to consider:

- Trail signage
- On-line listing
- Collateral (i.e. hard copy maps)

FRONTENAC COUNTY – FRONTENAC K&P

Frontenac County has developed a signage program, business engagement program and a management plan, however, there are some areas that should be focused on, as they will be critical to the long-term success and short-term launch (2026) of the product.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Consider the recommendations regarding online and collateral noted in the other recommendations. As well as a more fleshed out program to ensure a successful program.

ACCOMMODATION PLAN

An accommodation plan will highlight opportunities for collaboration with adjacent landowners between Verona and Sharbot Lake and Sharbot Lake and Calabogie. There are a number of creative opportunities that could be a revenue generator for the County.

- Amend any by-laws that would restrict the development of for-profit ventures on residential property
- Develop a compensation plan for landowners
- Management and maintenance program for sites
- Develop a consistent approach to new development
- Establish minimum standards for community/church facilities (i.e. washrooms, kitchen facilities, etc)

Some examples of potential ideas include:

The [Sentier Nepisiquit Mig'maq Trail](#), a 150km wilderness hiking trail from Bathurst, NB to Mt. Carleton Provincial Park.

The Camino offers hostels called [albergues](#) along the trail that are run by religious organizations, local authorities and other entities. This could be an option along the trail with community centres or church halls.

[Parks Canada](#) offers oTENTik, Oasis pods, Yurts and Rustic cabins both as front-country and back-country camping options.

SMITHS FALLS

The town of Smiths Falls is in a unique position as they are the connection point between The Ottawa Valley Rail Trail and The Cataraqui Trail, but they are not actually directly on the trail, nor does the current road link provide access to the downtown core. While many of the trails focused on the fundamentals of trail management and signage, the work required in Smiths Falls is much more targeted.

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PROGRAM

- Primary Trailhead (upon entering town from the OVRT and the Cataraqui Trail)
- Directional Signage throughout the town core (arrows to provide guidance navigating the route through town)

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Determine who is going to manage the business engagement program for the Cataraqui Trail and the OVRT. The town does not fall under Lanark County, nor does it work directly with the Conservation Authority, however, they are both the managers of the trails on either side of town, but the services and amenities fall within Smiths Falls jurisdiction.

A business engagement program should provide businesses with a number of levels for them to consider, and benefits would be based on the level they buy into. Some things that could be considered:

- Trail signage
- On-line listing
- Collateral (i.e. hard copy maps)

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ROUTE

Look into the option of removing one of the lanes as you come off the bridge on Beckwith to make it an active transportation corridor. This would create a safer experience for users as they connect onto the trail near the water tower.

BECOME PART OF THE TRANS CANADA TRAIL

Getting the route through town designated would allow Smiths Falls to potentially access Trans Canada Trail Funding and access to their wayfinding which could be used in the interim while town signage is being designed OR simply be the wayfinding arrows assisting in navigation through town.

Staging Area/Parking Lot – addressed in the inventory analysis

Review the Inventory Analysis and Trail Town Assessment – prioritize the activities based on capacity

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – SHARBOT LAKE TRAILHEAD RECOMMENDATION

TRAILHEAD LOCATION IN SHARBOT LAKE

A destination trail assessment was recently completed by Terminus Consulting, to determine whether the concept of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop (EORTL) had merit as a tourism product for the region. The 360km Loop will consist of portions of the Frontenac K&P, Renfrew K&P, The Algonquin Trail, Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail and The Cataraqui Trail. As part of the assessment process, existing and potential trailhead sites were assessed. This included assessing the options available in Sharbot Lake. Elements taken into consideration were the following:

- Parking area is conveniently located for easy access to the trail
- Parking area is adequately sized for peak visitation and unloading of ATVs and snowmobiles
- Parking area is attractive, well maintained, graded and kept clean with no litter
- Trailhead sign is located at the entrance of the trail or section of the trail
- Trail map is on display
- Essential information is provided at trailhead

The following assessments of the Sharbot Lake Beach site and the Boat Launch (old railway station) site were taken from the overall destination trail assessment for the EORTL.

BOAT LAUNCH

Factors impacting the placement of the Trailhead at the Boat Launch/Old Railway Station location:

- Provides a clear delineation between the K&P Frontenac and the Tay Havelock trails, and the trailhead can ensure that trail users know which trail to take.
- Provides adequate space for snowmobiles and ATVs to be offloaded.
- Provides adequate space for trailers and trucks to be parked while users are out on the trail.
- Does not have direct access to washroom facilities, however, signage can be placed to direct them to the public washrooms located at the beach.

SHARBOT LAKE BEACH

Factors impacting the placement of the Trailhead at the Beach location:

- Provides access to washrooms, picnic tables and shelters.
- The primary function of this site is a beach and playground, those coming to use it will not be pleased if they are unable to park in the area if there are trucks and trailers parked there.
- There is inadequate parking space available in the area for trailers and trucks, this will likely result in these vehicles parking in the Health Clinic parking lot, the Belong restaurant and along the road.
- Off-loading ATVs and snowmobiles near the beach and businesses could be disruptive and potentially dangerous with children running around.

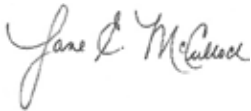
RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the factors noted above from the assessment, in particular the need for adequate space for snowmobiles and ATVs to be unloaded and the vehicles parked, it is recommended that the optimal location for the placement of the new trailhead for the Frontenac K&P in Sharbot Lake is at the boat launch (former railway station) where the K&P and the Tay-Havelock intersect.

The bicycle repair stand, located by the Belong restaurant can be relocated to the trailhead, and it can also have picnic tables and shelters and benches added on the site of the former railway station. Boaters, those using the railway park along with the trail users can benefit from these amenities. Dedicated bike stands and secure bike lockers should also be added, this will encourage cyclists to get off the trail and go into town. Directional signage can be placed on site to direct trail users to businesses in town, and direct people to the washroom and the tourist information centre located at the beach.

A primary focus in the development of the Eastern Ontario Rail Trail Loop will be the railway history of the region. A trailhead located at the original site of the railway station and next to the railway park creates a tremendous opportunity for placemaking and can become a feature for the town and the overall trail experience. This makes use of an otherwise underutilized property and can help to enhance the overall aesthetic of the town.

Respectfully submitted,



Jane McCulloch
Principal, Terminus Consulting

APPENDIX B – PARTNERSHIPS AND BUSINESS DIVERSIFICATION OPPORTUNITIES

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Partnerships are important to develop, particularly in smaller regions. Oftentimes communities will look at what they DON'T have rather than what they DO have. This means that communities will often sell themselves short before they ever get started because they may not have a full compliment of services and amenities to offer. This does not need to be a deficiency, rather think about how the different businesses and services within the region could partner together to fill in the gaps in the offerings.

This may require some thinking outside of the box, but once you start considering your assets you may be surprised to find out what unique experiences you can create. Keep these things in mind when you are thinking about potential opportunities:

- **Theming and Experiences:** Identify themes that can be carried throughout the entire trail experience and region
- **Think beyond the Trail:** NOT everything has to be “trail based”
- **Community Partnerships to engage residents:** Residents are your best ambassadors
- **Connecting Attractions, Cultivating Assets (non-traditional):** Farm tours, gastro-tours, local festivals
- **Casual/Experience-based:** Lobster dinners, kitchen parties, etc

You may be wondering where to start when it comes to creating unique partnerships- here are some ideas to get started!

Think of these as “recipes” to assist you in developing your partnership opportunities. There really is no wrong way to develop your partnership scenarios however have a good mix of experiences to make it well balanced.

Within a municipality:

- Local Restaurant
- Local Accommodation
- Local Artisan

= Unique partnership that could keep people in the region for an extra day

Within the region:

- Local Restaurant
- Experiential business outside of the town
- Local shuttle driver

= Unique partnership that allows businesses not directly on the trail to benefit from the trail

Here are some other potential partnership opportunities to consider:

Food and beverage are a motivating factor for many tourists. Partnering with food producers and local restaurateurs, a seasonal offering can be provided for residents and tourists alike that feature local products and can be eaten at the restaurant or taken as a picnic lunch. One restaurant in each community could be engaged to do this and work together to create unique menu options- this would be a great community building opportunity and unique to the region.

The Breweries** in the region could develop a “themed beer” for the Trail. This has been done in various regions: Saltbox Brewing Company in Mahone Bay (NS) has a beer named “Dynamite Trail Ale” (Dynamite Trail is part of the larger Rum Runner Destination Trail), Port Rexton Brewing in the Bonavista Peninsula (NL) has a beer called the “Skerwink Haze” (the Skerwink Trail is a hiking trail in the Bonavista Peninsula) and Brasseux D’La Cote in Tracadie has created the “Velorousse” based on the Veloroute de la Peninsule acadienne.

Accommodations along the bicycle route can partner to shuttle luggage from accommodation to accommodation so that the bicycle tourists do not need to make arrangements to have their luggage transported along the routes. This allows users to enjoy the linear trail experience and will provide greater opportunities for people to see more of the region.

Accommodations can work together to coordinate the transportation of the luggage amongst themselves. Ideally one accommodation would take the lead in coordinating (i.e. central contact number) for one year and then another would take on the role.

Accommodations could provide bagged lunches to their guests for them to take on their journey or they can partner with a local eating establishment to provide bag lunches for their guest to take on their bicycle trip. These would be available upon check-out in the morning at the front desk.

Accommodations could partner with bicycle rental locations to arrange to have bicycles dropped off (and picked up) if their guests are renting their bikes for their trip. Bicycle rental locations along a trail route could partner with each other and allow bikes rented at another location to be dropped off for a tune-up or repair at a discounted rate should something happen along the route.

BUSINESS DIVERSIFICATION

Often there are small things that existing businesses can do to make their businesses more appealing for the trail tourist. It doesn’t take much for a person to feel special and welcome. Think about those hotels that leave a chocolate on the pillow or the restaurant that provides free refills. Going that extra mile means a lot and makes the trip that much more memorable. It is important to understand the consumer. Reviewing the profiles of the bicycle and eco-tourist and doing a bit more research on your own will be a good way to ensure that your changes will have an impact. There are also larger diversifications that can be made, but they will likely cost additional funds. These funds may well be worth it if the business can see a return on its investment, but it may be a project that happens once the trail is further established.

Here are some potential business diversification ideas:

- An existing Inn or B & B could make their establishment more desirable for the cyclist by adding a bicycle storage locker with a cleaning and repair station. They could also provide a high carb bagged lunch that guests could order the day before and it would be ready at breakfast for them to take for the day.
- Restaurants could offer special meals on the menus for people who are travelling long-distances. Perhaps some high carb options or “gourmet picnic lunches” to take on their hike or bike ride.
- Walking sticks and trail mix could be available in hotels rooms for people who may not be cycling but might be interested in going out for a walk on the trail.
- Tie into local festivals- there could be a unique opportunity to connect community trails to the festivals and create an “on-trail” component.

** It is worth noting that K & P Brewing located in Sharbot Lake has already jumped on the opportunity and named the brewery after the railway.

APPENDIX C- LEANING INTO THE RAILWAY THEME



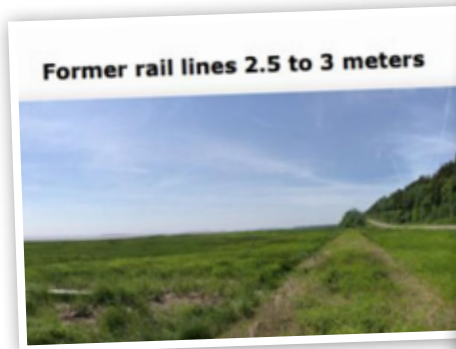
The Pinellas Trail in Dunedin, Florida has embraced their railway heritage and have incorporated the theme into their bike racks and roadway crossing in trail towns.

APPENDIX D - TRAIL CORRIDOR OPTIONS FOR THE CATARAQUI TRAIL

When complete, The Shore-Line Trail will be a 150 km greenway that hugs the coast of New Brunswick from Alma to Cap-Acadie. When the railway was abandoned, portions of the trail were reclaimed and there are now significant gaps along the route. Rather than building these new sections to the same standard as a rail-trail, they are building a single-track trail that will be accessible for cyclists and walkers/hikers.

This could be an option for the Cataraqui Trail, in so much as some of the sections that require significant work can be narrowed and developed as a single track (allowing clearance for groomers) and focus on developing the rail trail standards in more populated areas or where the current trail is in relatively decent condition.

TRAIL CORRIDOR TYPES



APPENDIX E – FRONTENAC BUSINESS TRAIL SIGN PROGRAM



APPENDIX F - HYBRID CYCLISTS: NEEDS & WANTS FOR A TRAIL EXPERIENCE

Hybrid cyclists blend comfort and versatility, often seeking multi-day recreational experiences with moderate challenge and ample support. They represent a high-yield demographic and are ideal for trail tourism development.

TRAIL SURFACE & CONDITION – NEED

- Smooth, consistent surface (stone dust or pavement preferred)
- Well-maintained trails with no large potholes, ruts, or soft sand
- Limited steep gradients; moderate elevation changes are acceptable

WAYFINDING & SIGNAGE – NEED

- Clear, consistent signage at trailheads and junctions
- Directional signage at trail splits and transitions between trail segments
- Information about distances, destinations, hazards, and rules

AMENITIES & SERVICES – NEED

- Frequent rest stops (benches, shelters, water stations)
- Accessible washrooms
- Bike repair stations and/or nearby repair shops
- Shaded areas and scenic lookouts
- Availability of accommodations (hotels, B&Bs, campgrounds) at reasonable intervals (every ~40–60 km)

SAFETY & SECURITY – NEED

- Cell phone coverage or signage noting no-service areas
- Safe and secure parking or bike storage
- Trail patrols or contact information for assistance
- Trail access points with visible maps and emergency plans

FOOD & REFRESHMENT – WANT

- Access to cafes, pubs, and grocery stores along or near the trail
- Picnic areas and food kiosks during peak season
- Opportunities to sample local food or beverages

CULTURAL & RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES – WANT

- Off-trail detours to local attractions (museums, heritage sites, artisan markets)
- Interpretive signage about history, culture, and nature (railway, biosphere, local lore)
- Thematic elements (e.g., railway heritage installations, public art)

TRAIL COMMUNITY & IDENTITY – WANT

- Feeling of being part of a welcoming trail community
- Social or group ride options
- Opportunities to engage with locals or fellow riders

TRIP PLANNING & DIGITAL TOOLS – NEED/WANT

A dedicated website or app with:

- Trail conditions
- Route planning tools
- Accommodation and amenity listings
- Offline map access for areas without cell service
- Option for GPS routing or downloadable trail maps

APPENDIX G - TRAIL ASSESSMENT FORM

DESTINATION TRAIL ASSESSMENT: TRAIL EVALUATION

Name of Trail	
Trail Type	
Location	
Trail Length	
Authorized Users	
Trail Surface	
Level of Difficulty	
Organization	
Trail Manager	
Contact Information	
Trail Management Plan	
Trail Liability	
Basic Usage Stats	

Summary Description of Trail

Evaluation completed by:

Name	
Date(s)	

Sections of the trail evaluated, conditions and other comments
--

EVALUATION FORM

SECTION 1: PRE-TRIP

WEB SITE	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Web site provides complete trail description.</p> <p>0 = no web site 5 = web site provides detailed information</p>						
<p>Web site provides suitable planning tools to allow visitors to organize their trip including accurate maps, entry points, distances etc.</p> <p>0 = no information 5 = complete accurate information</p>						
<p>Designated route options are clearly identified on the web site and trail route is easy for visitors to understand.</p> <p>0 = trail route is confusing 5 = clearly identified routes are identified</p>						
<p>Web site provides complete information about communities and related services on or in the vicinity of the trail.</p> <p>0 = no information 5 = complete and detailed information</p>						
<p>Suggested itineraries are provided on the web site with distance, duration and links to attractions or services along the way.</p> <p>0 = no information 5 = complete and detailed information</p>						

Comments:

GETTING THERE	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Complete and accurate information for finding designated entry point(s) or trailhead is provided on the web site.</p> <p>0 = no information 5 = complete and accurate information</p>						
<p>Information for finding the designated entry point(s) or trailhead is provided in all other sources (brochure, guidebook, maps etc.).</p> <p>0 = no information in other sources 5 = complete information in all sources</p>						
<p>Signs are located at exits and intersections to locate designated entry point(s) or trailhead.</p> <p>0 = no signs at intersections and exits 5 = excellent signage at exits and intersections</p>						
<p>Road signs are clear and in good condition and provide required information</p> <p>0 = no road signs 5 = adequate road signs, clear and in excellent condition</p>						

Comments:

SECTION 2: ENTRY AND ACCESS POINTS

PARKING	0	1	2	3	4	5
Parking areas conveniently located for easy access to the trail. 0 = parking is not available within 15 min of trail head. 5 = parking is located immediately adjacent to the trail head or access point						
Parking area(s) are adequately sized for expected peak visitation. 0 = inadequate 5 = extensive and adequate parking						
Parking area(s) are attractive, well maintained, graded and kept clean with no litter. 0 = poorly condition/unsightly debris 5 = clean, attractive, well maintained						

Comments:

ENTRY POINT SIGNS	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Trail signs are located at each entry point.</p> <p>0 = no signs 5 = clear, well-maintained signs at each entry</p>						
<p>Trail entry sign located at the start of the trail (or section of the trail) is attractive and in good repair.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = attractive and in good repair</p>						
<p>Essential information is provided at access points or trailhead including (circle all that apply):</p> <p>0 = no information 5 = all essential information</p>						
<p>Trail map is on display at all access points.</p> <p>0 = no map 5 = clear and accurate trail map</p>						

Comments:

SECTION 3: ON THE TRAIL

TRAILS PROMOTED FOR USE BY CYCLISTS

TRAIL NAVIGATION	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Accurate printed map (or functional smart phone enabled version) is available without charge or for purchase at the trailhead.</p> <p>0 = no user map available 5= excellent map for use on the trail</p>						
<p>Markers placed at regular intervals to indicate that users are on the designated route.</p> <p>0 = no markers 5 = frequent markers clearly indicate the trail</p>						
<p>Markers are of consistent design and kept in good condition.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = highly visible consistent design and in excellent condition</p>						
<p>Signs located at trail intersections indicate connections to other trails where necessary.</p> <p>0 = trail intersections are unmarked 5 = trail signs clearly indicate alternative routes</p>						
<p>Maps and/or signs at entry points or on the trail show distance to community hubs and ideally indicate essential cyclist needs (water, washrooms, etc)</p> <p>0 = no information 5 =maps/ trail signs clearly indicate location of community hubs</p>						

Comments:

TRAIL CONDITIONS AND MAINTENANCE	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Trail has a smooth hard surface throughout.</p> <p>0 = rough or soft trail surface 5 = trail is paved or equivalent hard packed gravel</p>						
<p>Trail surface is in good condition, without erosion and free of ruts, rocks or potholes.</p> <p>0 = poor or damaged 5 = Excellent condition with smooth unbroken surface</p>						
<p>Trails are kept clean and are clear of all debris or litter.</p> <p>0 = debris is unsightly and/or obstructs travel 5 = trail is clean and clear of debris</p>						
<p>Slopes are moderate (less than 10%) with wide turns permitting safe descents without risk to other users</p> <p>0 = Trail is excessively steep and dangerous 5 = Gentle sloping trail tread.</p>						
<p>Road crossing are well marked, and barriers are in place to ensure trail users slow down or pause at crossings.</p> <p>0 = No mechanisms to control trail users at crossings 5 = Road crossings are well designed with signs and barriers</p>						
<p>Construction methods and materials minimize impact to environmentally sensitive areas.</p> <p>0 = significant impacts 5 = materials protect all sensitive areas</p>						
<p>Viewing and rest areas are kept clean and cleared of all garbage and debris.</p> <p>0 = unsightly garbage or debris 5 = viewing/rest areas are clean</p>						

<p>Boardwalks, stairs, bridges, safety railings are sound and in good condition.</p> <p>0 = structures are damaged or unsafe 5 = all structures are in excellent condition</p>						
<p>Trail markings and warning signs are in good repair.</p> <p>0 = markers are poorly maintained 5 = all signs and markers are in good repair</p>						

Comments:

SECTION 4.0: TRAIL DESIGN

TRAIL ROUTE AND ALIGNMENT	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Trail entry points are clearly indicated and are easily accessible by roads in good condition.</p> <p>0 = poor access 5 = well marked with excellent access</p>						
<p>Trail is continuous throughout designated route, unobstructed by natural barriers.</p> <p>0 = frequent interruptions 5 = no barriers or interruptions</p>						
<p>Trail provides diverse/varied visual perspectives along the route.</p> <p>0 = monotonous 5 = highly varied perspectives</p>						
<p>Trail design minimizes conflicts with vehicles.</p> <p>0 = significant potential conflicts 5 = minimal conflicts, excellent conflict management strategies</p>						
<p>Trail design minimizes conflicts between users.</p> <p>0 = significant potential conflicts 5 = excellent conflict management strategies</p>						
<p>Trail minimizes man-made visual impact of industry, commercial development, and housing (unless specifically themed to interpret these impacts).</p> <p>0 = significant industry impacts unrelated to the trail theme 5 = no impacts or impacts are directly associated with trail theme</p>						
<p>Trail design provides attractive perspectives of towns and settlements that intersect with the trail route.</p> <p>0 = unattractive perspectives 5 = excellent orientation</p>						

<p>Trail design frequently intersects with distinct ecological features (old growth, etc.)</p> <p>0 = no distinct features 5 = frequent features, excellent orientation</p>						
<p>Trail design frequently intersects with/ provides varied perspectives of natural elements (water, unusual landforms, cliffs)</p> <p>0 = No distinct features. 5 = frequent features, excellent orientation</p>						
<p>Trail provides frequent access to viewpoints, points of interest or interpretive sites</p> <p>0 = none 5 = frequent viewpoints, excellent orientation</p>						
<p>Trail alignment is varied with occasional changes in direction and orientation</p> <p>0 = no change in direction... 5 = varied and interesting changes</p>						
<p>Innovative methods to overcome barriers (steep slopes, streams, rivers etc.)</p> <p>0 = lack of design 5 = excellent design and innovation</p>						

Comments:

CONSERVATION	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Trail design avoids or mitigates any potential environmental damage associated with wet areas and easily damaged trail surface.</p> <p>0 = Wet areas, flooding and braiding of trail corridors 5 = trail is dry and stable throughout (or has well designed boardwalks)</p>						
<p>Trail design mitigates problems related to steep slopes prone to erosion.</p> <p>0 = significant erosion problems 5 = no signs of erosion</p>						
<p>Trail corridor is oriented to avoid damage to rare species.</p> <p>0 = significant risks 5 = safely avoids impacts</p>						
<p>Trail appears free of any sources of contamination (possible seepage from washrooms etc.)</p> <p>0 = Signs of contamination 5 = No apparent risk of contamination</p>						

Comments:

SAFETY	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Clear guidelines & information are provided to users on safety related issues at the trail head/entry points.</p> <p>0 = No safety related information 5 = Excellent safety related information at the trail head</p>						
<p>Trail is buffered from vehicle traffic and/or effective measures to mitigate possible vehicle conflicts at intersections (signs, barriers, etc).</p> <p>0 = Significant risks 5 = trail is well separated from traffic or effective</p>						
<p>Dangerous areas (natural and vehicle related) are identified with visible and easy to understand warnings.</p> <p>0 = no warning signs 5 = hazard signs are well-designed and effective for all dangerous areas</p>						

Comments:

INTERPRETATION	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Trail themes are interpreted with graphic text panels, trail brochure, in guidebooks and/or on the web site.</p> <p>0 = no interpretation 5 = excellent interpretation</p>						
<p>Interpretation helps the visitor to understand the natural history, ecology or heritage of the region.</p> <p>0 = unhelpful 5 = interpretation is interesting and informative</p>						
<p>Interpretation is well written and is based on clear and accurate information.</p> <p>0 = poor 5 = excellent content</p>						

Comments:

SECTION 5. TRAIL EXPERIENCE

GENERAL	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Trail has a brand or theme that reflects unique attributes of the region.</p> <p>0 = None 5 = regionally appropriate brand /theme</p>						
<p>Trail experience connects users with a principal selling feature or tourism theme promoted by the province.</p> <p>0 = Unconnected 5 = excellent connection to provincial tourism strengths</p>						
<p>Trail allows visitors exceptional opportunity to experience the most attractive aspects of the provincial landscape.</p> <p>0 = Poor 5 = excellent</p>						
<p>Trail offers visitors an opportunity to experience attractive/ significant aspects of provincially recognized history and heritage.</p> <p>0 = Insignificant 5 = excellent</p>						

Comments:

NATURAL FEATURES	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Trail route features a high diversity of landscape features (topography, view-planes and natural features).</p> <p>0 = none 5 = high diversity of landscapes</p>						
<p>Trail route incorporates panoramic view-planes that include regionally significant landscapes.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = highly significant view-scapes</p>						
<p>Trail route features extra-ordinary geographic features. This may include waterfalls, canyons and rapids or extra-ordinary rock formations, cliffs, caves etc.</p> <p>0 = Common features 5 = one or more extraordinary features</p>						
<p>Trail route features high ecological diversity.</p> <p>0 = monotonous ... 5 = exceptional diversity</p>						
<p>Trail features one or more nationally recognized significant ecological features.</p> <p>0 = no significance 5 = nationally significant ecology</p>						
<p>Trail incorporates phenomena or landscape features that are well known at a provincial level, nationally or internationally.</p> <p>0 = lacks features... 5 = national/internationally recognized</p>						

Comments:

CULTURAL FEATURES	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Trail features regionally significant historical and cultural landmarks.</p> <p>0 =none 5 =recognized and highly significant</p>						
<p>Trail is associated with a distinct regional heritage theme (historic/traditional cultures).</p> <p>0 =none 5 =distinct theme</p>						
<p>Trail route intersects with preserved or restored tourism heritage features such as historic pathways, bridges, streetscapes.</p> <p>0 = None.... 5 = Highly significant</p>						
<p>Trail route intersects with sites or communities that include provincially recognized attractions (such as museums, historic sites etc.).</p> <p>0 = None. 5 = Highly significant</p>						

Comments:

SECTION 6: TOURISM SERVICES AND AMENITIES

TOURISM SERVICES	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Communities along the trail include outlets for groceries and trail supplies.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = frequent intervals</p>						
<p>Communities (and services) on or adjacent to the trail include cafes and restaurants.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = frequent</p>						
<p>Cafes and restaurants are attractive with an appealing theme.</p> <p>0 = unattractive/ordinary 5 = highly attractive and themed</p>						
<p>Trail features a variety of food and culinary options.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = extensive variety</p>						
<p>Communities along the trail include camping facilities suitable for tenting.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = frequent</p>						
<p>Communities along the trail feature fixed roof accommodations.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = frequent intervals</p>						
<p>Fixed roof accommodations are attractive and have an appealing theme.</p> <p>0 = unattractive 5 = highly attractive and themed</p>						

<p>Accommodations, cafes and other services recognize and/or are customized to support trail users (space for bicycles/ hiking gear storage, trail maps/ information on site etc.).</p> <p>0 = no recognition of trail users 5 = significant support for trail users</p>						
<p>Communities on or adjacent to the trail offer rental services that complement or enhance the trail experience (bicycles, kayaks etc.).</p> <p>0 = no rental services 5 = numerous rental options</p>						
<p>Designated activities are available along the trail such as swimming, boating, festivals, entertainment etc.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = frequent intervals</p>						
<p>Trail features unique and/or recognized agrifood outlets and attractions representing a regional theme or specialty (wineries etc).</p> <p>0 =None 5 =frequent</p>						
<p>Rest areas and picnic sites are available on the trail.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = frequently</p>						
<p>Safe and secure parking for bicycles and/or ATVs</p> <p>0 = none 5 = frequently</p>						

Comments:

ACCESS TO COMMUNITIES	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Designated access corridors lead to communities along the trail.</p> <p>0 = no designated access to communities 5 = excellent access</p>						
<p>Access to communities along the trail are clearly marked with adequate signs.</p> <p>0 = poorly marked 5 = excellent</p>						
<p>Locations and description of services along the trail are on the web site.</p> <p>0 = no information on services 5 = complete information</p>						
<p>Information about services along the trail is accurate and clearly communicated.</p> <p>0 = poor 5 = accurate and well communicated</p>						

Comments:

PACKAGE/ITINERARY DEVELOPMENT	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Location of service hubs or towns are suitable for multi-day itineraries. (Ideally service hubs should not be more than 20k apart).</p> <p>0 = Poorly spaced 5 = Frequent</p>						
<p>Information for itinerary planning is on trail web site and/or in promotional material (may include proposed itineraries, distance between key tourism services, graphic representation of services, hubs, and trail town locations).</p> <p>0 = no information 5 = complete information on services</p>						
<p>Links between package tour operators on web site and promotional material.</p> <p>0 = none 5 = extensive listing of package tours</p>						

Comments:

TRANSPORTATION	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Secure locations for vehicle parking etc. are provided in the proximity of principle entry points.</p> <p>0 = No secure parking 5 = Excellent options for secure long-term parking</p>						
<p>Trail features shuttle or other transportation options</p> <p>0 = no shuttle options 5= excellent options</p>						
<p>Options for baggage transport are publicized in Trail Information.</p> <p>0 = no options 5= excellent options</p>						

Comments:

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WASHROOMS	0	1	2	3	4	5
Clean and accessible washrooms are located on the trail or conveniently located nearby 0 = no washrooms 5 = clean and accessible washrooms						
Washroom locations are accurately identified on trail maps 0 = no identification of washrooms 5 = washroom locations are identified on trail maps						
Washrooms locations are clearly indicated on the trail 0 = no identification of washrooms 5 = washroom locations are indicated on the trail						

Comments:

GARBAGE/WASTE DISPOSAL	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Garbage & recycling bins are available at or in the vicinity of principle access points.</p> <p>0 = no garbage or recycling bins 5 = well located garbage and recycling bins</p>						
<p>Garbage and recycling bins are well maintained and emptied regularly</p> <p>0 = poor condition/maintenance 5 = garbage bins are well maintained and emptied regularly</p>						

Comments:

SECTION 7 – COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY SUPPORT	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>There are user groups that support trail activities.</p> <p>0 = limited 5 =diversity of trail user groups</p>						
<p>User groups host activities on the trail.</p> <p>0 = limited 5 = very active</p>						
<p>Service Clubs have supported trail activities/amenities/ development.</p> <p>0 =limited support 5 = very supportive</p>						
<p>Businesses are actively tapping into the trail users.</p> <p>0 = limited 5 = very engaged</p>						
<p>Schools are actively using the trail as an outdoor classroom.</p> <p>0 = limited 5 = very engaged</p>						

Comments: