

A Waterfront Multi-Use Recreation Trail for Everyone

Waterfront Trail Rotary Community Action Team (WTRCAT)

City Council Information Package



WTRCAT RECOMMENDS THAT THE CITY:

- **Earmark sufficient funds of the \$16.5 million existing Renew Thunder Bay Reserve fund for Waterfront Trail expansion recognizing that any funds must be used to lever funding from Province/Feds on a matching basis of 1/3 from each party.**
- **Commit to making completion of the Waterfront Trail a top priority in the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.**
- **Places the Waterfront Trail expansion in the City's approved 10 year capital budget and forecast.**

In July 2021, City Council approved a phased plan ([page 172 at this link](#)) to develop a multi-use recreational Waterfront Trail from Fisherman's Park at the mouth of the Current River to Prince Arthur's Landing and then south to Mission Marsh. This includes a new bridge over rail lines serving the Richardson and Viterra grain elevators, and crossing the Kam River on an improved Jackknife Bridge to connect to Syndicate Avenue.

When Port Arthur Rotary heard about City plans for extending the Waterfront Trail, a Rotary Community Action Team was formed with representatives from 12 active living groups representing thousands of citizens of all ages and all walks of life.

The Waterfront Trail Rotary Community Action Team (WTRCAT) came together to promote, advocate and support the City to implement a 20+km Waterfront Trail that will link existing City trails and potential trails of the Fort William First Nation in the south and both the Current River parks and Kinghorn Rail-to-Trail project to the north.

Port Arthur Rotary is currently pursuing Charity status to provide a vehicle to enable fundraising by the WTRCAT from all possible sources.

Why do we need a trail? WTRCAT vision for the future.

We live on the largest freshwater lake in the world.

Every day hundreds of people enjoy recreational access to the Waterfront at Prince Arthur's Landing, but citizens of all ages, abilities and incomes want increased access to Thunder Bay's 50+ km of waterfront so we can move through our city along the shores of the largest lake in the world. An expanded Waterfront Trail will provide low tech, easy-to-maintain recreation/tourism infrastructure. The Trail will provide access to spectacular vistas, clean air and refreshing lake breezes.

We can create an incredible trail network for citizens, visitors, tourists, and guests.

By approving the proposed expansion, we can connect the parks of the Current River – Boulevard, Centennial, Shuniah Mines, Trowbridge, and Cascades – to the Waterfront Trail. There are plans to further extend the Trail but also to create spurs to existing urban trails not only for the enjoyment of local citizens, but for new tourism and economic development possibilities.

A Waterfront Trail helps meet City goals and targets.

Trails bolster City strategic pillars of growth and renewal while meeting objectives identified in the Earthcare Thunder Bay Sustainability Plan including integrated urban mobility that is affordable and accessible; improved sustainability; reduced pollution; and improved quality of life for current and future generations.

Waterfront Trails are a catalyst for Renewal.

With relatively few catastrophic weather events combined with low cost housing, clean air, and abundant fresh water, our city is attractive to potential newcomers. An extensive Waterfront Trail is a key aspect for future economic and tourism development and a key tool to retain and attract people to Thunder Bay.



Click here [to FLY OVER the proposed Waterfront Trail from the Current River to the Jackknife Bridge](#)



WATERFRONT TRAIL

ROTARY COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

WATERFRONT TRAIL FACTS

CITY WATERFRONT TRAIL PROPOSED ROUTE – Fisherman’s Park via Mission Marsh to Jackknife Bridge 13.5 km

EXISTING TRAIL LENGTH – 2 km

CITY PROPOSES 3-PHASE BUILD – short-term 1-5yrs (\$3.3M); intermediate term 5-10yrs (\$2.7M); long term 10+yrs (over \$14.3M)

COST – @\$23M (June 2021 estimate by City Administration)

BIG TICKET ITEMS – -new pedestrian bridge over spur line tracks at Richardson Terminal to permit passage over train cars that frequently block the road which will create a safe lakefront trail connection between the parks of the Current River and Prince Arthur's Landing (2021 estimated cost \$6.5M); pedestrian access over Jackknife Bridge to Syndicate Avenue with approach road improvements is crucial to building a waterfront trail network accessible to all parts of the City (2021 estimated cost \$6.5M); improvements to McKellar Bridge -- currently a one-lane pinch point for all City fuel transport (2021 estimated cost \$2M estimate)

OBSTACLES – rail and river crossings and private property negotiations including CP rail and other industrial landowners.

WTRCAT WATERFRONT TRAIL VISION ROUTE – Fisherman’s Park via Mission Marsh to Fort William Historical Park with future links to Kinghorn Rail-to-Trail; Fort William First Nation; Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park with further links to Shabakwa & Pigeon River through Northwestern Ontario Recreational Trails Association (NWORTA)

ECONOMIC STUDY – WTRCAT via Port Arthur Rotary is partnered with Destination Northern Ontario, CEDC & Trans Canada Trail to complete an Economic and Tourism Impact Study to assess benefits of trail expansion. Study is under way.

WTRCAT ROLE – to advocate, promote, and raise funds to help build City’s Waterfront Trail

FUNDRAISING – WTRCAT via Port Arthur Rotary registered charity (in progress)

SAMPLE FUNDING SOURCES –

[Federal Government Active Transportation Fund to help build new and expanded networks of pathways, bike lanes, trails and pedestrian bridges](#)

[Ontario Builds: Recreation](#)

[Ontario Trillium Foundation Community Building Fund](#)

[NOHFC](#)

[Trans Canada Trail \\$55M Funding Program](#)



Waterfront Trail: Next Steps

WTRCAT is pleased to see some progress in 2022 on the Waterfront Trail but citizens want the promise of more Waterfront Trail in the near future, not 10 or 20 years from now.

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- **Commit to making completion of the Waterfront Trail a top priority in the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.**
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Once City commitment is made, access to Provincial and Federal multi-use trail funding -- that the City has yet to apply for -- becomes possible.

With our spectacular views of Lake Superior and the Sleeping Giant, coupled with our pioneering rail history, industrial heritage, and grain transport legacy, we have all the parts we need to create a world-class trail. We can unite our community through an accessible Waterfront Trail that encourages waterfront revitalization while integrating economic, environmental, and social goals.

Thousands are already onboard. Letters of support -- 40 and counting -- continue to be received from diverse groups and citizens. The Waterfront Trail can be the signature project that ties waterfront revitalization together.



Appendix: City Waterfront Trail Plan Update June 2021 Maps



Waterfront Trail Plan Update June 7, 2021 Prince Arthur's Landing, North Water Street, and Mouth of Current River Segments

See Steve Robinson's Drone Video of this section of Waterfront Trail moving north to south. [Click Here](#)



Waterfront Trail Plan Update June 7, 2021 Sleeping Giant Parkway South and Intercity Segments



WATERFRONT TRAIL
ROTARY COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM

Appendix: City Waterfront Trail Plan Update June 2021 Maps



Waterfront Trail Plan Update June 7, 2021
Island Drive South and Mission Island Segments

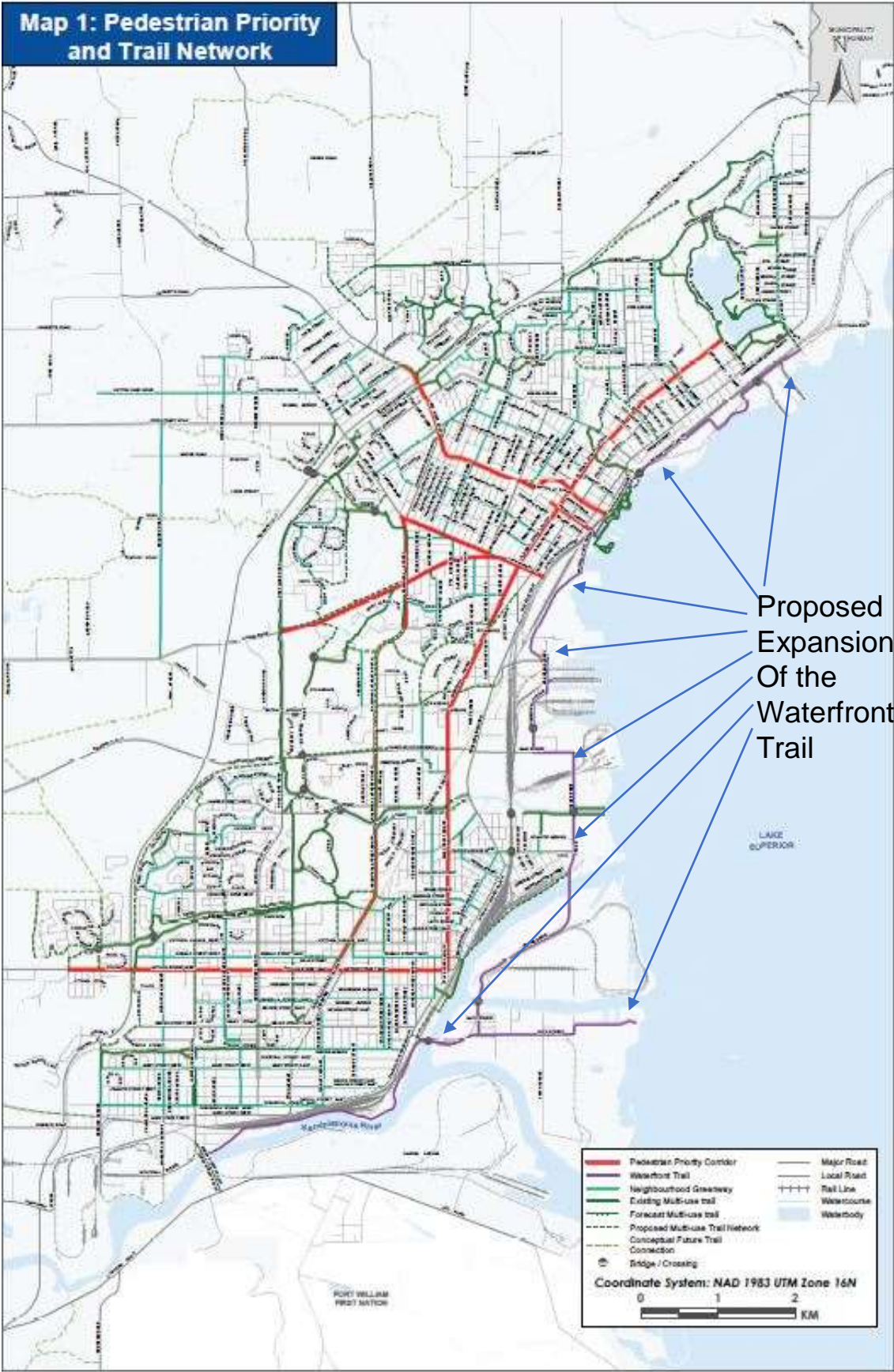


Sources: NRCAN, ERI Canada and Canadian Community Maps contributors. | ERI Canada | City of Thunder Bay



WATERFRONT TRAIL
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PORT ARTHUR

Appendix: Proposed City Waterfront Trail and Existing Active Transportation Plan (Map taken from 2019 City ATP Document [Find Plan by clicking here](#))



Appendix: Member Organizations of WTRCAT



Appendix: Supporters of the Waterfront Trail!!

Waterfront Trail Rotary Community Action Team Member Organizations:

Port Arthur Rotary
Handicapped Action Group Inc.
Special Olympics Thunder Bay
Fort William First Nation
Lappe Nordic Ski Club
National Team Development Centre
Thunder Bay Metre Eaters
Confederation College Cross Country Running Team
Thunder Bay Hiking Association
Firefighters Ten Mile Road Race

Letters of Support Received from the Following:

Lakehead Rotary
Fort William Rotary
Thunder Bay Rotaract
Nipigon Rotary
Kamview Nordic Centre
Sleeping Giant Loppet
UpRiver Running
Thunder Bay Walkability Committee
Ten Mile Road Race Training Group
Thunder Bay Cycling Club
Black Sheep Mountain Bike Club
Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce
Ambassadors Northwest
Waterfront District Business Improvement District
Allure Condominiums
Superior Country Tourism
Outland Youth Employment Program
Allure Condominiums
Ecosuperior Environmental Programs
Lakehead Region Conservation Authority
Environment North
Thunder Bay Field Naturalists
Thunder Bay Railway Historical Society
Thunder Bay Yacht Club
Canadian Lighthouses of Lake Superior
Friends of Grain Elevators
Great Lakes Waterfront Trail
Thunder Bay Art Gallery
Northwestern Ontario Recreational Trails Association
SSSAA Sports
Confederation College
Thunder Bay Historical Museum Society
Lakehead Transportation Museum Society