





1.4 Consultation and Open Houses

As part of a methodology for the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study, the inventory collection included two critical engagement activities:

1. Stakeholder Consultation and
2. Community Open Houses in Erin and Hillsburgh.

1. Stakeholder Consultation

The consultant team met with representatives from 13 stakeholder groups. These groups represented the Town, trail and business associations and local community groups. Discussions about the Erin Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study were formulated on a standard set of questions asked to each stakeholder representative. The following responses are organized into categories based on either a category of stakeholder or category of response.

Dialogue:

Question 1: Who do you, as a project stakeholder, represent?

Project Stakeholders Interviewed Included:

- Elora Cataract Trail Association
- Erin Equine
- Town of Erin Parks and Recreation
- The County of Wellington
- The Town of Erin Trails Advisory Committee
- The Town of Erin Fire and Rescue
- Wheelchair Cycling
- The Erin BIA
- Agricultural Society
- The Rotary Club
- Climate Change Action Group
- Transition Erin
- Erin Heritage Committee

Question 2: What are your general thoughts on the idea of a Riverwalk Trail for Erin and Hillsburgh?

All groups expressed a keen interest in the development of the project and thought that the Riverwalk Trail would be a positive feature for the Town. The trail itself would facilitate many of the group's various activities. It would be an additional recreational activity for local residents, offer alternative pedestrian and cycling routes, and would be a natural attraction for both the local community and visitors. Whether it was the trail itself, or the possible alignment of the trail in terms of its location, the trail would effect most of the stakeholder groups in some way.

Question 3: How does this project reflect your groups interests / or activities?

The following 'reflections' are grouped by the Stakeholder Group type:

Trail Advocacy Groups were most interested in the networking potential of the trail. Connections to existing trails and trail extensions were encouraged. The neighbouring Elora Cataract Trail is the predominant trail linking Erin with Hillsburgh and then as far west as Elora, and to the east, to Cataract. By connecting to this trail, users would have full benefit of the broader County trail system.

Service and Action Groups are able to use the trail either as a demonstration for their groups mandates and/or vision (sustainability, environmental issues, education) or as a vehicle for project implementation (i.e. tangible projects that could be adopted and implemented by a group).

Private Groups and Community Members said that the trail was a favoured asset for the local community in terms of recreation and healthy living. It was a means to access the river, and it encouraged connectivity through the town via an alternative route other than road travel.

Retail: The proposed Riverwalk Trail is seen as a positive asset that would bring tourists into the town, which is good for business.

Staff, Administration / Town and County: Collectively, this group as a service group for the Town, categorized the Trail as an extension of local infrastructure that was sought after by the local community. Most of the Trail will be located on lands owned by the Town or County, and as such, will have some direct effect on the Town / County, in terms of installation, maintenance, staffing, etc. The Trail itself was identified as a positive development and the idea of a trail is well referenced in the Town's Official Plan, and the County's Official Plan. Recreational trails as a recreational asset/facility, are not currently covered by the Town of Erin's Parks and Recreation department.

Question 4: Trails include many general components such as connections, alignments, destinations along the trail, and many specific parts such as trail surfacing, seating, signs, markers etc. Is there anything in particular that you feel is important to better serve your group?

- Connections with other trails;
- Wayfinding, Signage and Interpretation;
- Lookouts onto river, bird watching, seating;
- Connection to the Library (Hillsburgh);
- Trail around pond preferred over a single lookout (for Hillsburgh);
- Access to trail for all terrain emergency vehicles – standards in place – locking bollards or gates; wintertime access to be considered;
- Access onto trails for wheelchairs and bikes;
- Universal design and accessibility;
- Resilient design; enduring materials.

Question 5: In your opinion, what are your two biggest concerns that we need to be aware of?

A. Property Ownership:

- Private land ownership; respect of private property;
- Consider using trail committee/ volunteer groups to advocate to private land owners re trail development;
- Relationship with CVC;
- Vandalism of neighbouring buildings;
- Private vs public lands;
- Lack of viable connections.



B. Maintenance:

- Staffing for maintenance and garbage pick up;
- Funding for infrastructure will be required for success;
- Consideration of yearly maintenance costs in regards to staffing, equipment, furnishings (garbage bins, collection maintenance vehicle, trail grooming etc).
- 'Cleaning up' of the river banks for more aesthetic appeal;
- No revenue from trail use means more burden to Town;
- Encourage service and volunteer groups to participate in overall maintenance – 'adopt-a-trail' program.

C. Safety

- Rear of building security;
- Conflict / integration with current road and laneway traffic;
- Vandalism issues (lighting helpful);
- Increased opportunity for trespassing;
- Lack of lighting;
- Liability;
- Emergency access to the trail by emergency response vehicle.

D. Infrastructure, related supportive facilities

- Connections with other trails needed;
- Limited parking in town – need more for increased trail use;
- Access to trail – well marked and facilitated (seating, garbage bins, parking, washrooms etc);
- Proper surfacing all season;
- Safety – aging dams.

E. Overall Planning

- Not to lose the integrity of the Town of Erin;
- Protect turtle nesting sites;
- Longevity of the trail – consider sustainable and durable materials;
- That it won't get done;

- Consider equitable treatment for both Erin and Hillsburgh;
- The Trail needs to be part of a larger vision or master plan for the Town of Erin;
- Other possible priorities for town might be more important.

Question 6: In your opinion, what do you see as the two biggest opportunities for the Riverwalk Trail?

Trail Connections

- Growing the trail network;
- Implementation of recommendations by the Wellington County Active Transportation Plan;
- Erin could use more trails as they are currently underserved against other municipalities in the County;
- New access points to river and trail so that the river can be appreciated more;
- Means to get people out onto the water;
- Integrate river with the downtown;
- Connections to Historic Downtown.

Economic Benefits

- Encourages economic development through increased traffic/ use;
- Another place for people to visit;
- Good venue for both existing and new events;
- Extension for new business – e.g. bike rentals; bed and breakfasts;
- Attract new businesses to the town;
- The trail plan would offer smaller spin off projects that the Rotary (or other service groups) could help with;
- As part of Greenbelt there may be funding available for trails;
- Fund-raising opportunity.

Personal and Community Health

- Safe alternative for walking (rather than on the streets);
- Good activity for growing senior population;
- Corporate Sponsorship opportunity – a place that corporate sponsors can easily contribute;
- Vehicle for education and fitness;
- Encourages community pride;
- The 'Idea' of the Riverwalk is the opportunity;
- Opportunity to bridge Erin and Hillsburgh – the connection itself will encourage development of associated services and events at the 'other end' so that there is somewhere to go when you get there.

2. Community Open Houses

ska

Erin Community Open House

Date: April 27, 2016

Participants: 15



Hillsburgh Community Open House

Date: April 28, 2016

Participants: 18



Activity 1 — Sacred Places and Must Sees

In small groups, participants were asked to identify places of importance that should be considered in a Riverwalk Trail. Two large aerial images of Erin; the first at an overall context, the second focusing on the downtown area, were distributed to the groups. With adhesive dots, participants placed these on the aerial images and coded with a number which would correspond to coded comments on a separate sheet, identifying and providing information on the “sacred place”.

Activity 2 — Best Routes, All Things Considered

In the second activity, groups were asked to identify current walking/hiking/biking routes that they were aware of or used and that should be considered in a Riverwalk Trail development. This was completed by participants denoting the trails on the aerial images previously used for activity one.

Activity 3 — Identifying the Challenges

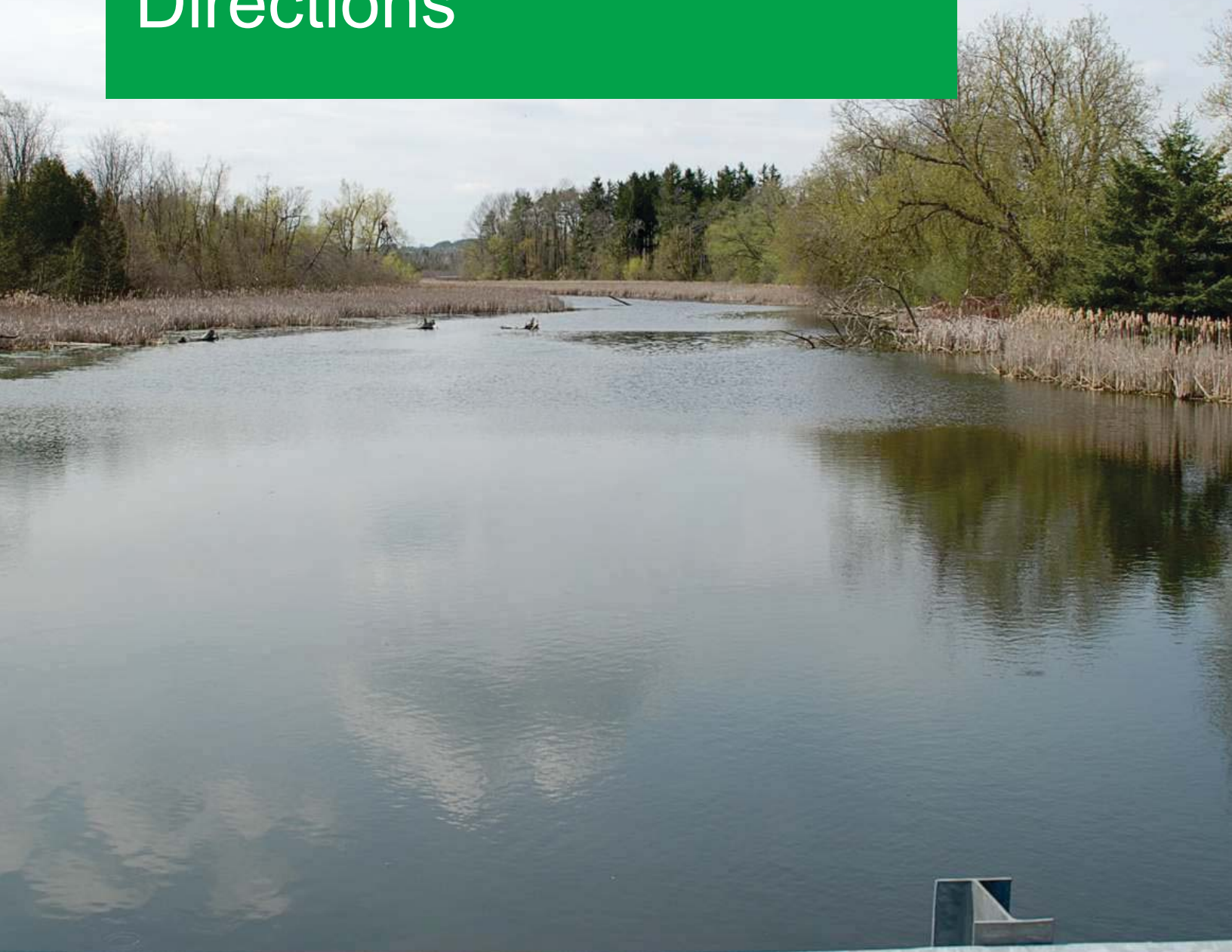
The third and final activity allowed groups to identify current challenges, real or perceived, with physical impediments/hazards, personal safety, undesirable areas, etc. to be considered in a Riverwalk Trail. Using the aerial imagery once again, participants placed another round of coded (lettered) adhesive dots to identify “challenge areas”. Elaboration of the challenges were captured on a separate page.



The method included three (3) activities to give community members a voice, in terms of what they'd like to see within a Riverwalk Trail Development. It also gives the consultants, SKA, insight into the community's knowledge of places that should be considered or avoided when creating the feasibility report for the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail.

2.0

Identifying Preliminary Directions



This chapter provides an understanding of the analysis of the site conditions available to a potential Rotary Riverwalk Trail and deals with opportunities and constraints, user groups, amenities, and the identification and evaluation of existing conditions.

A photograph of a stone archway in a park-like setting. The archway is constructed from stacked stones and has a white, curved metal or plastic structure on top. It is situated on a grassy area with a large tree to the right and a house visible in the background. The sky is blue with some bare tree branches in the foreground.

2.1 Opportunities & Constraints

Each and every site presents a unique set of opportunities and constraints influencing design considerations. To be the most successful at understanding site feasibility, it is important to have a thorough grasp of all factors and their associated benefits or implications. The following section outlines the opportunities and constraints influencing the feasibility of the Rotary Riverwalk Trail.

2.2.1 Opportunities

Support:

- Town of Erin Council, and Official Plan, etc.; Wellington County;
- Stakeholder Groups: Erin BIA; Credit River Conservation; Elora Cataract Trail; The Erin Agricultural Society;
- Public Service Groups: Erin Rotary.

Proximity to Existing Trails:

- Proposed trail is in close proximity to the Elora Cataract Trail, Erin's Heritage Walking Trail and the Water Tower Trail;
- Opportunity to connect to existing trail systems to provide users with a greater and more diverse recreation and leisure experience;
- Opportunity to form a network of connections between neighbouring communities and attractions;
- Enhances sustainable commuter connections into town centres promoting active transportation and healthy lifestyles;
- Building a connection enables users of existing peripheral trail routes to enter and explore Erin and Hillsburgh providing an opportunity to increase economic development.

Natural Features:

- Opportunity to provide experiences through and along the West Credit River, and wetland and forested areas;
- The use of appropriate interpretation signage provides an opportunity for self-directed learning;
- Takes advantage of the benefits brought on by exposure to natural areas.

Existing Desire Lines and Trails:

- Provides insight into currently desired routes where people are already travelling;
- Opportunity to incorporate these paths into future design while increasing visual appeal and accessibility.

Proximity to Desired Destinations:

- Trail would be in close proximity to downtown, shopping, and general recreation areas (views, natural features for bird-watching, existing parks, etc.);
- Opportunity to increase economic benefits for all businesses by bringing users through and in close proximity to these areas (e.g. restaurants, shops, commercial recreation, places of lodging);
- Contributes to the local economy.



Heritage Features:

- Opportunity to route the trail along community heritage features like built structures, dams, and to integrate with Erin's Heritage Trail and Stanley Park;
- Allows community members and visitors to connect with the town's cultural heritage.

Open Spaces Conducive to Parking:

- Opportunity to use open space for parking that provides accessible access to various trail segments;
- Provides a means for those coming from out of town to park and enjoy the trail without congesting downtown streets.

View Ports:

- Opportunity to route the trail that takes advantage of current viewports;
- Potential for interpretive value;
- Trail routing considers proposed view ports that maximize visual appeal.

Existing Road Bridges and Dams:

- Utilize existing infrastructure to link proposed sections of trail;
- Provides ease of access with minimal infrastructure development to gain access across or around rivers and ponds;
- Potential for enhanced viewports and interpretive learning;
- Capitalize on heritage value as an important cultural asset.

Beyond this point is private property.



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Erin TRAILS
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Operated by the Town of Erin.
Built and maintained by volunteers.



2.2.1 Constraints

Private Property:

- Proximity to and use of private land for trail development raises issues between Town and landowners;
- Concerns include: possibility of vandalism, trespassing, littering, noise pollution, liability, and enforcement;
- When developing trails adjacent to private lands adequate and appropriate screening must be considered.

Wetlands, and associated wildlife and fauna:

- Consideration must be made regarding potential negative impacts trail creation may have in these areas i.e. disruption of habitat;
- Requirement for sensitive design (e.g. boardwalk, bridges, etc.) more costly;
- On-site trail layout required to minimize impacts related to trail development.

River Flood Lines and Water Levels:

- Restricts location and boundaries of some trail components;
- Requires certain trail surfacing that may be more expensive;
- Potential for infrastructure damage during harsh weather events.

Existing Dams and Bridges:

- Structural integrity of existing dams to be reviewed regarding increased use due to trail development;
- Limited or no shoulder room / extra road width may be needed to accommodate preferred widths for "sharing" of roads;
- Infrastructure improvements / repairs may be required for safe and efficient trail use.



Existing Infrastructure Limitations:

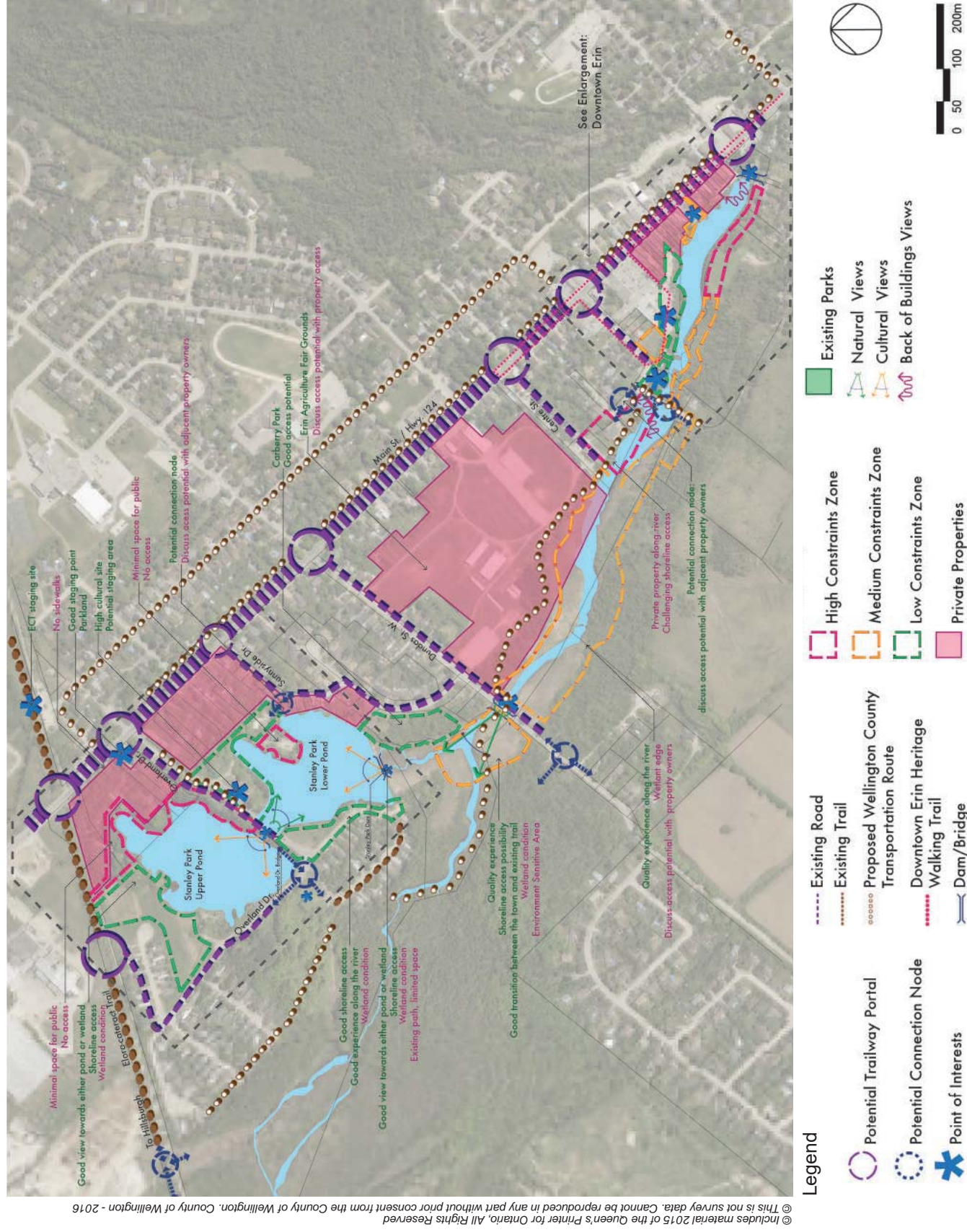
- Some roads are too narrow for the addition of infrastructure (sidewalks, etc.);
- Limited accommodation for cyclists or multi-use causes potentially unsafe conditions.

Lack of Visual Appeal:

- Includes 'messy' river banks and unattractive back of buildings;
- Some trail components may have to be constructed through areas that are not the most visually appealing;
- Re-routing of trails may need to occur to capture the most aesthetically appealing areas despite additional costs;
- Potential for an accrued cost of clean-up / revitalization.

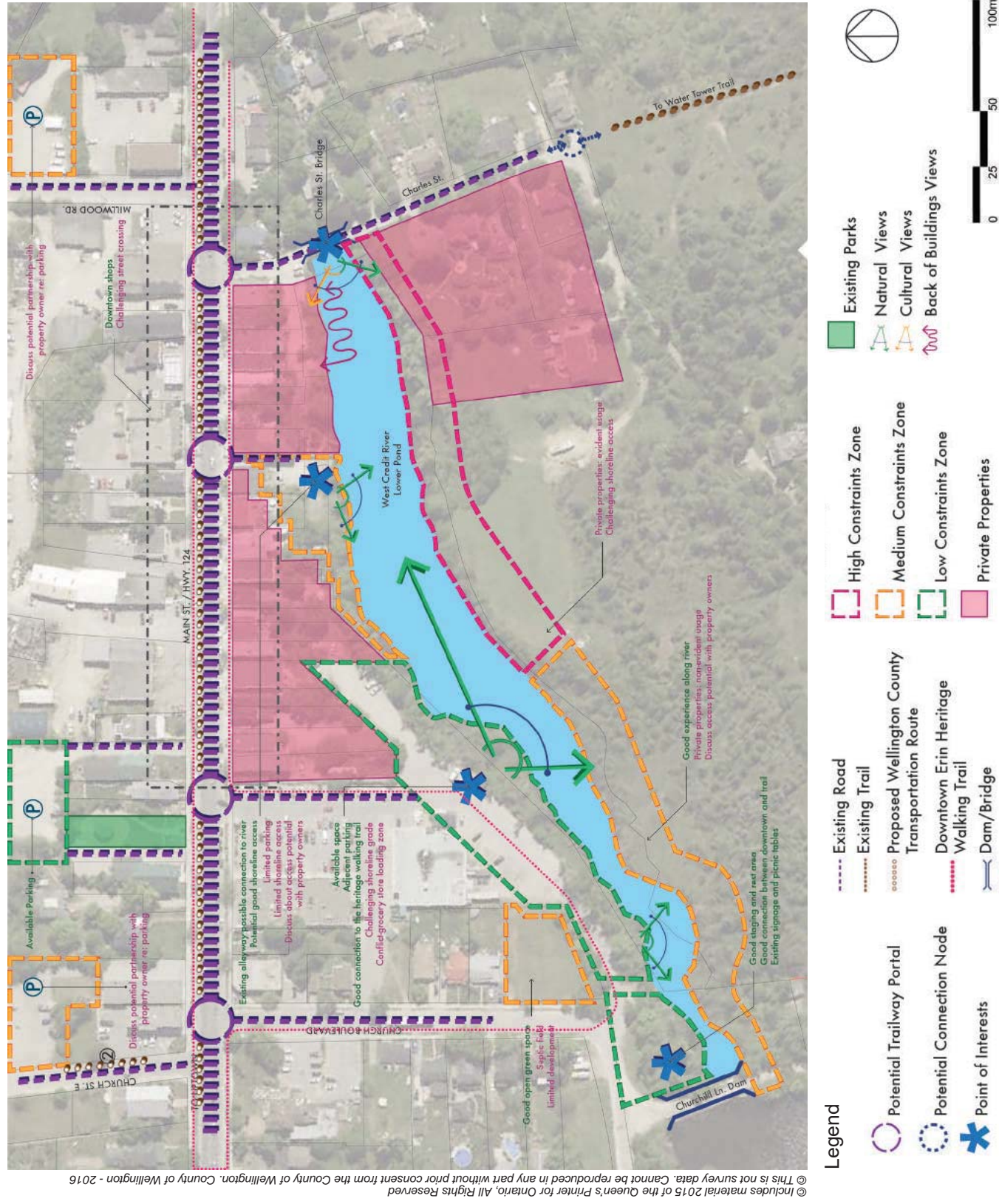
Main Street Erin:

- High traffic volume, minimal pedestrian crossings;
- The transition from a natural trail to a main road may be overwhelming, and may not be the experience people are hoping for;
- Multi-use accommodation becomes challenging in high traffic areas.

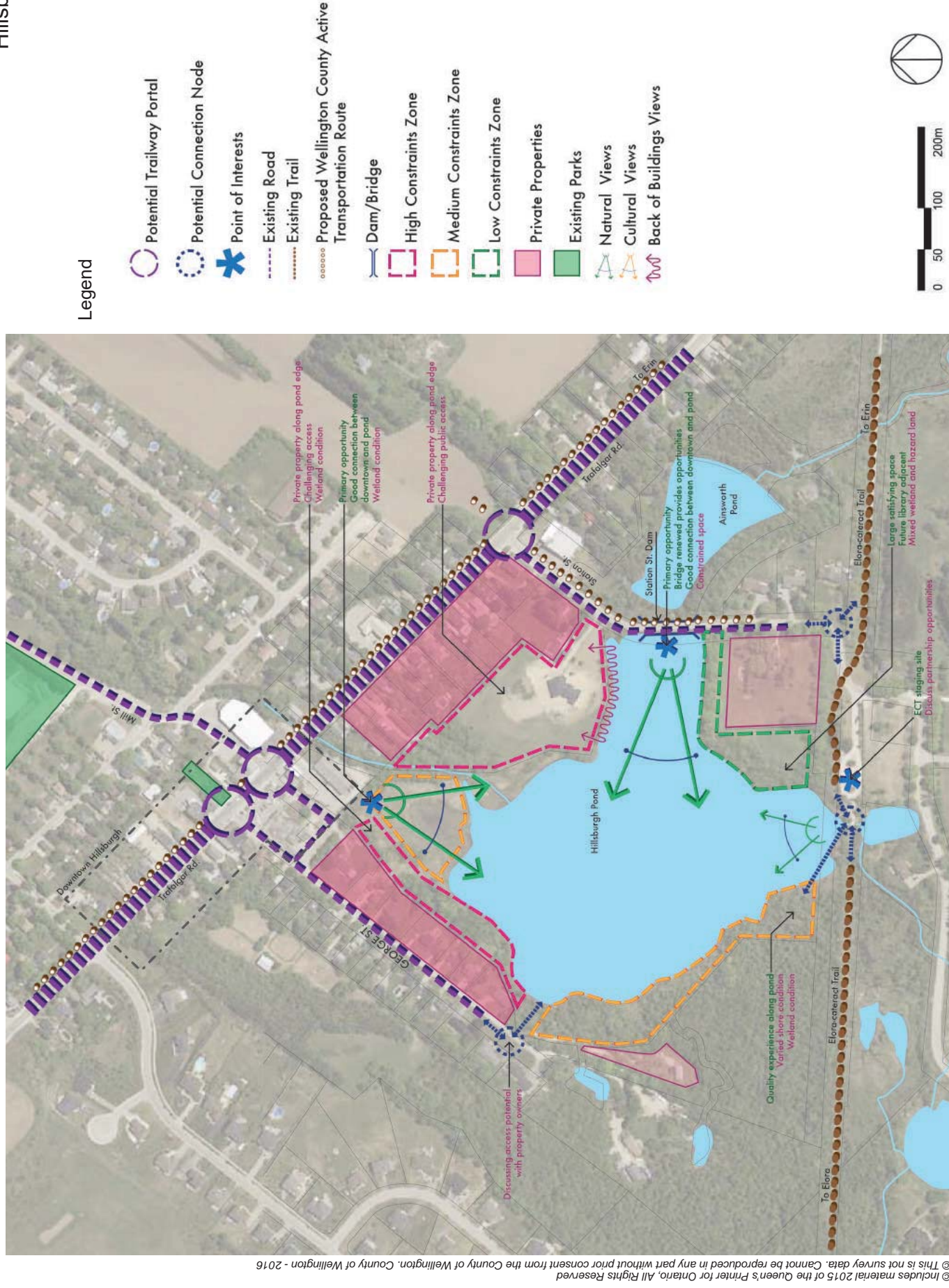


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Figure 17: Opportunities and Constraints
Downtown Erin Enlargement



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Figure 18: Opportunities and Constraints
Hillsburgh



2.2 Trail Users

The understanding of the different types of trail users is imperative in addressing feasibility and designing a multi-use trail system. The following section identifies various user groups and their associated needs when it comes to trail use. Other important considerations include accessibility standards and designing for crime prevention.

2.2.1

In Consideration of... the trail user:

ska

Walkers:

- Single, pairs or groups;
- More significant in urban areas;
- Will have accessories – strollers, picnic baskets, walking aids, dogs;
- Trips for shopping, work, errands, school, exercise, trail appreciation;
- Includes walkers with a distinct destination and those experiencing the trail itself;
- Use sidewalks, parking lots and plazas;
- Use trails where convenient, safe, well designed and maintained;
- Will use trail for short-cuts;
- 95% of walkers travel less than 2.5kms - some as much as 5-10kms;
- Expect a higher degree and frequency of amenities: rest stops, comfort, furnishings, wayfinding.

Hikers:

- More self sufficient, like challenges;
- Longer distances used – from 5-30kms;
- Willing to use less safe routes;
- Interested in natural features;
- Interested in maps;
- Expect fewer amenities.

Runners and Joggers:

- Accomplishment oriented – distance markers important;
- 3-15kms typical at higher speeds;
- Prefer softer surfaces – granular and earth;
- More closely related to the 'hiker' group than the 'walker' group.

Cyclists:

- Travel greater distances with higher speeds (15-20kms/hr on trails; up to 30kms/hr on roads)
- Prefer different surfacing based on bicycle wheel type;
- Many prefer off-road due to safety;
- Discourage use on sidewalks due to conflict with pedestrians;
- Considered 'vehicles' when crossing roadways;
- Expected to follow motorized vehicle traffic laws when on a roadway;
- Will travel 0.5 – 1.0 m away from curbside to avoid obstructions.

Skateboarders:

- More urban use;
- Prefer hard, smooth, flat grade surfacing; asphalt or concrete ideal;
- Need room for stopping at base of slopes or ramps.



Equestrian:

- Requires room for trailer parking and horse loading in Trail Head area;
- Off road trails preferred;
- Stable soft (granular) surface preferred over hard (asphalt) surfaces;
- Wider trial width (minimum 3.6m) preferred to limit user conflict and accommodate 'lay-by' or passing users;
- Higher clearance required for riders on horseback;
- Additional trail user etiquette signs for both equestrians and others;
- Travel in small groups; will walk single file;
- Prefer unobstructed trails – or optional thoroughfares if possible (i.e. provide an optional route around a bridge);
- Upcoming obstacles (bridges, steep slopes, road crossings, traffic) and optional routes should be identified to limit backtracking.

2.2.2

In Consideration of... AODA:

In developing routing options for the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail, every opportunity should be made to provide accessible trails for people with disabilities wherever practical. This will ensure all user groups needs are accommodated and requirements of the AODA are satisfied to the greatest extent possible, given the context of each trail's location, the surrounding environment and trail type experience desired. Further consultation (per section 80.8) with the Towns Accessibility Advisory Committee, the public and persons with disabilities should be considered as part of the trail implementation process.

AODA technical standards for trail widths, surfacing, running and cross slopes should be a minimum goal for trail design. However, as part of a natural environment, the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail may have occasions where compliance is not possible. In such instances, adequate signage, (as per the AODA standard) identifying upcoming variances in grade, surfacing, slopes and changes in level should be included on the trail.

Possible trail route segments have been evaluated based on the potential for the trail to comply with AODA standards (See Figures 22-25).



2.2.3

In Consideration for... CPTED

(Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)

Safety must be taken into consideration for trail design, and is often a concern for users especially in natural areas. CPTED - Crime Prevention through Environmental Design - is “a proactive design philosophy built around a core set of principles that is based on the belief that the proper design and effective use of the built environment can lead to a reduction in the fear and incidence of crime as well as an improvement in the quality of life” (CPTED Ontario, 2016). Therefore in developing routing options for the Rotary Riverwalk Trail, CPTED’s three main principles were taken into consideration, they are:

- Natural surveillance;
- Natural access control; and
- Territorial Reinforcement

2.3 Trail Amenity Programming



In the absence of specific trail design guidelines for the Town of Erin, this feasibility study will adopt basic 'best practice' standards for the trail pathways, furnishings and amenity programming. These general guidelines will be used to support the trail budget estimates for trail development and are discussed in the following section.

2.3.1

Trail Amenities and Furnishings to consider:

Trails

General:

- All efforts should be made to meet AODA guidelines;
- Appropriate signage identifying deviations from AODA shall be incorporated where the changes occur.

Surfacing:

- Shall be firm and stable, and should resist indentations;
- Granular trails (limestone screenings or stone dust) should be a minimum surfacing requirement; asphalt or boardwalk surfacing as conditions permit or required for use;
- Shall be an appropriate width to accommodate multi-use;
- Clearance: minimum of 1500mm wide to accommodate multi-use 2 way circulation; 2100mm head room;
- For boardwalks, surface gaps / openings min. 20mm; boards to run perpendicular to movement;
- For trails adjacent to water: a continuous edge restraint 50mm above the trail surface shall be included on the water side of the trail, and shall be designed to allow surface drainage.
- Location: shall follow the route with the least amount of environmental impact, to be reviewed with appropriate regulatory agency (i.e. CVC).

Slopes:

- Completely accessible trails should be less than 3%.
- Trails with slopes between 3 and 5%, should have a level resting area every 30m min. and have 1500mm min. lengths.
- Slopes of up to 10% can be used if topography and natural drainage patterns dictate.
- Most users find trails over 10% difficult. These are considered 'steep' by users without disabilities.
- Cross slopes should allow for quick surface drainage to the out slope – facing downhill. On a paved surface – 3% or less; on a natural soil, 5-8%.

Staging Areas, Trail Heads and Rest Stops

- Staging areas are primary trail access points and might include a full complement of amenities including: parking, washrooms, maps and picnic areas;
- Trail heads are secondary access points, and might be located between trail segments, highlighting a new trail section or a trail connection where a decision must be made on which trail to go on;
- Generally, rest areas should be located where people might be inclined to stop for a break or in areas with information, parking, views and lookouts, picnic areas etc.
- Rest areas should be provided for every 5kms along popular rural recreational trails;
- In urban areas, where demand and use will be higher, near senior's centres, apartments and along waterfront promenades, resting areas should be much closer, with intervals of 100 – 250m. At a minimum, a rest area should include one seating opportunity (bench, rock, etc) with more in areas that might support larger groups.



Bicycle Facilities

- Bike racks should be included in all trail head staging areas, or places where a cyclist is likely to stop and take a rest, or disembark to continue on foot. Look out areas, trail heads, and parking lots are suitable places for bike racks;
- More bike racks should be included in urban areas, or areas that would be considered an appropriate 'dis-embarkment' site. (near stores, restaurants etc);
- Opportunity for Erin Rotary Riverwalk branding and style re-enforcement.

Wayfinding

- Maps and Information: To be located in primary trail head and parking areas, and secondary rest stops (picnic areas);
- Trail Identification Signs: information provided on the conditions (length, slope, degree of difficulty etc) of the trail;
- Signage shall be easily understood and detectable by users of all abilities. It is important to ensure that signage, mapping, and messaging clearly communicates accessible trails, enabling users to make informed personal decision about which pathways to use;
- Directional Signs – Where there is a choice of direction; indicating direction and distance to amenities;
- Distance markers – On each trail circuit, segmented distance markers identifying distance travelled, and amount yet to go;
- Opportunity for Erin Rotary Riverwalk branding and style re-enforcement.;
- Bicycle lanes on existing roads or asphalt surfaces to include trail identification (pavement marking or signs);
- Include signs identifying land ownership and stewardship (i.e. CVC; the Rotary Club; private property);
- Regulatory and Safety signs to highlight important messages regarding trail conditions, trail etiquette, etc.



Waste Bins

- Locate near access to rest stops, trail heads, picnic areas and parking areas;
- Ensure appropriate access for maintenance vehicles;
- Offer a recycling option;
- Optional rain guard;
- Opportunity for Erin Rotary Riverwalk branding and style re-enforcement.

Safety Bollards

- Provide separation between pedestrian circulation and vehicles in parking lots or low speed traffic areas;
- Opportunity for Erin Rotary Riverwalk branding and style re-enforcement.

Security Fencing

- Coordination with private property owners will ensure acceptable treatment for both parties;
- Fencing should segregate and contain public trail from private spaces;
- Consider a minimal setback from trail;
- Additional planting along fence will provide further discouragement;
- Sturdy, non-climbable fencing with adequate footing should be considered a minimal standard;
- Additional 'friendly language' signage identifying private property will discourage mistreatment or potential vandalism.

Buffer Treatments

- Coordination with private property owners will ensure acceptable treatment for both parties;
- Provides physical separation between private and public spaces without full visual screening;
- Vegetative or structural buffers, or combinations to be considered;
- Planted buffers have a less divisive appearance than security fencing;
- Complimentary native plant material should be considered for buffers.



2.4 Trail Types

In analyzing existing conditions in regards to possible trail routes a clear set of five trail types became apparent including:

1. Main and/or Side Street;
2. Greenspace Trails;
3. Wetland Trails;
4. Bridges and/or Dams; and
5. Alleys and/or Laneways.

Each trail type has a set of existing characteristics as well as ways they can be integrated to fit the character of the Rotary Riverwalk Trail. The following section identifies and discusses each.

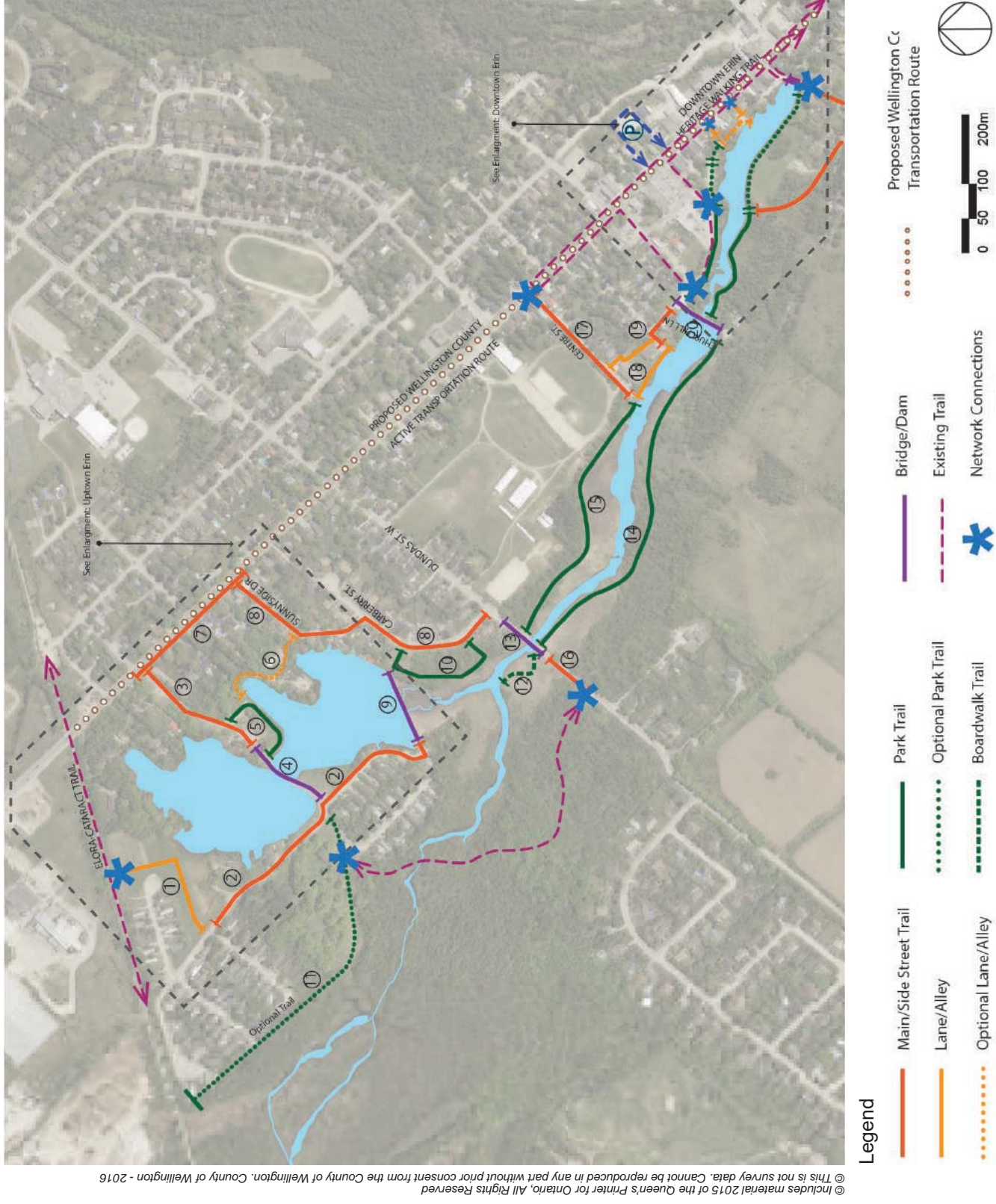


Figure 20: Trail Types
Downtown Erin

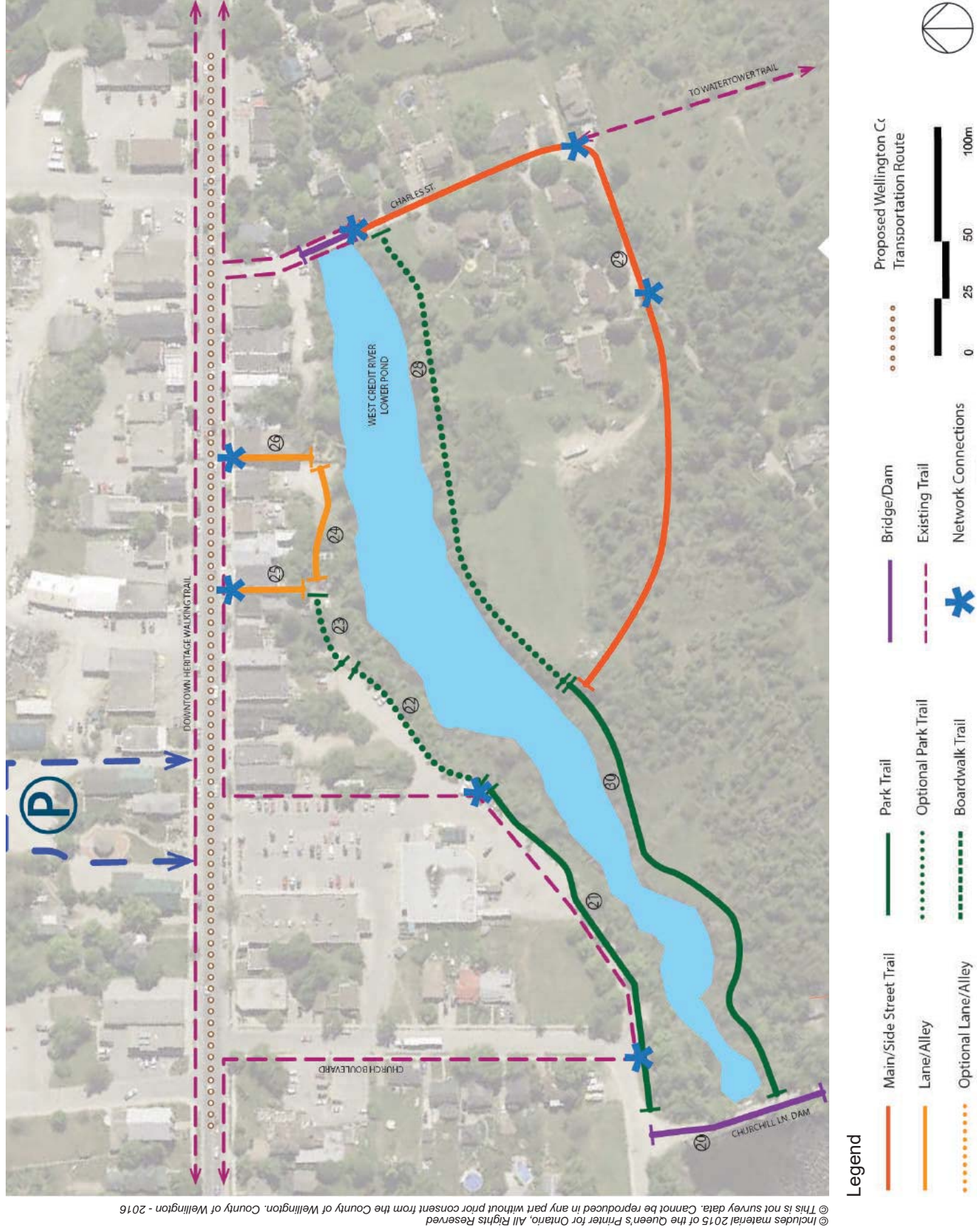
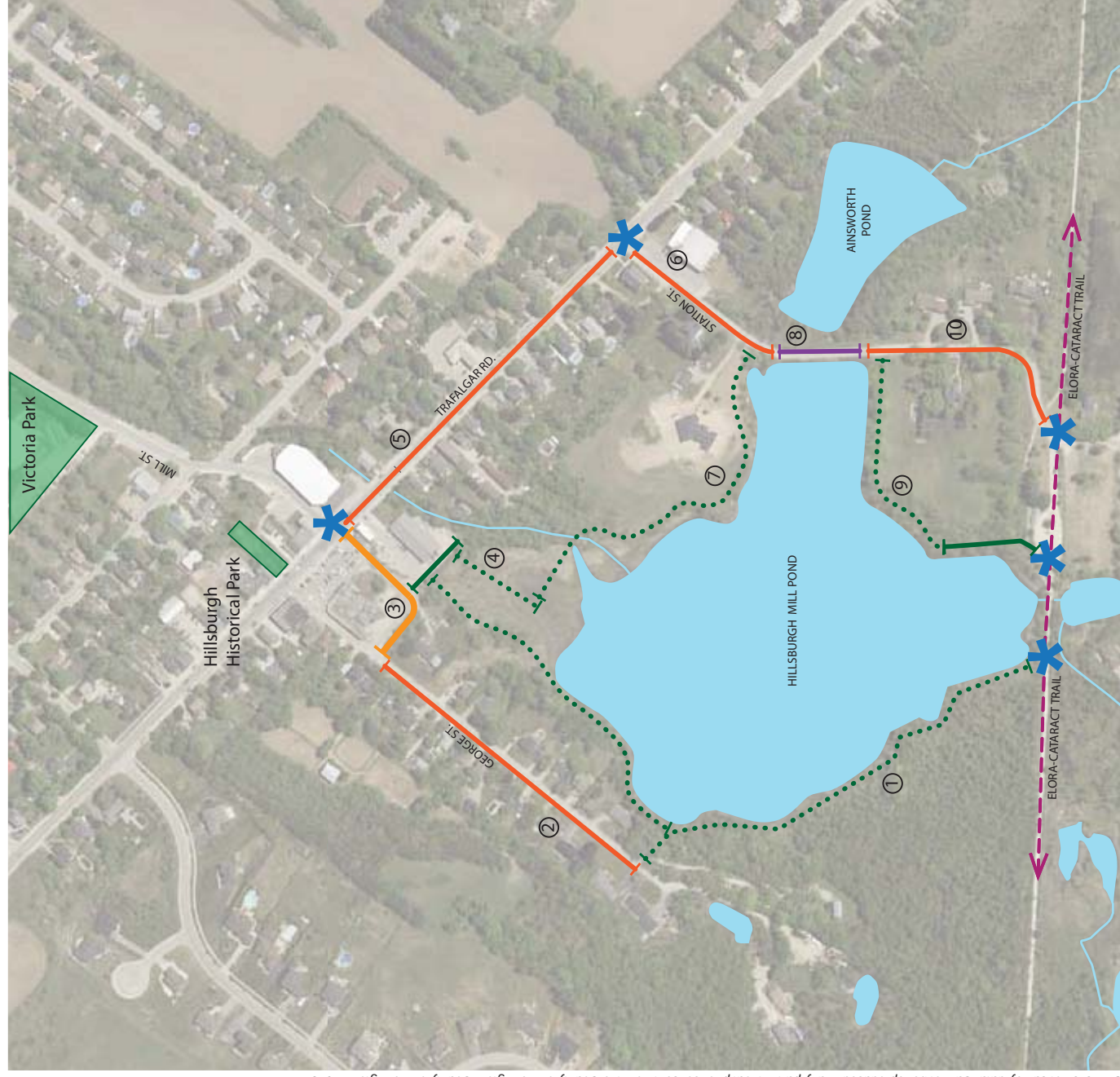


Figure 21: Trail Types
Hillsburgh



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2.4.1 Trail Types - Main and Side Streets

Characterized By:

- Existing Infrastructure: Depending on the street hierarchy, trail routes located on existing main streets and sideroads will include elements that can be used by a trail, such as the road itself, sidewalks, paved or gravel surfaces.
- Urban Experience: The Town of Erin's main street routes are typically located within the urban fabric of the town, within major traffic corridors.
- Downtown Connection: Main and Side Streets are the main connectors between the river and the downtown. The Trail can be linked to downtown stores, restaurants and businesses through use of existing routes.
- Accessible: As main thoroughfares, Main Streets and Side Roads already offer a high level of accessibility, and can accommodate additional modifications with some level of upgrade.

As Part of the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail:

- Include trail markers to identify the route as part of the Riverwalk Trail.
- Include road markings to identify bicycle routes.
- Integrate trail identification and use with future streetscape plans.
- Transition zones between other trail types and main / side streets should include staging area amenities such as trail identification markers, information kiosks with maps, seating opportunities, bike racks and waste receptacles.
- Trails proposed on privately owned properties will require partnering.



2.4.2 Trail Types - Greenspace Trails

Characterized By:

- Lack of Existing Infrastructure: Possible new trails are often identified by existing desire lines or 'cow paths' - worn surface pathways suggest that these will be successful routes in the future - this is where people want to go.
- Adjacency: The routing of 'park trails' include various trails along the river's edge, with various situations on the opposite side of the path - more public green space, a laneway and/or a parking lot or private land.
- Natural Experience: Most park trails will be located in areas that have a predominately natural setting, with strong visual and/or physical connection to the water's edge.

As Part of the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail:

- Include trail markers to identify the route as part of the Riverwalk Trail.
- Heighten riverwalk experience by opening up choice views to the river.
- Maintain a clean rivers edge free of debris, discarded materials etc.
- Park trails should include rest opportunities with a higher frequency in high-use areas.
- Maintain trail guidelines and design standards (re: surface conditions, widths, and slopes) to support accessible and multi-use trail opportunities.
- Maintain a safe and comfortable experience by adopting CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) guidelines.
- Trails proposed on privately owned properties will require partnering.



2.4.3 Trail Types - Wetland Trails

Characterized By:

- Location in a Wetland Zone (designated by Credit Valley Conservation Authority).
- Natural Experience: Wetland trails will be in highly naturalized and ecologically sensitive areas, with proximity to wildlife populations.

As Part of the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail:

- As per CVC regulations, all trails located in wetland zones will be boardwalk trails.
- Boardwalk design shall follow guidelines for accessibility.
- Include interpretive panels for information on various ecological systems of the wetland area.
- Ensure safe and well marked access points from adjoining trail routes.
- Offer appropriate lookout vantage points to accommodate larger groups.
- Trails purposed on privately owned properties will require partnering.



2.4.4

Trail Types - Bridges and Dams

Characterized By:

- Existing bridge and/or dam
- Connections to roadways
- Views of water or pond

As Part of the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail:

- Trail opportunities to be integrated with future bridge or dam improvements.
- Designated lookout platforms, 'belvederes' or sidewalk widening will offer safe passage for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians.
- Opportunity for interpretive panels.
- Trails proposed on privately owned properties will require partnering.



2.4.5

Trail Types - Alleys and Laneways

Characterized By:

- Narrow vehicular lanes, one or two way traffic, either between buildings or in residential neighbourhoods.
- Shared space for all modes of traffic increases safety concerns.
- Privately owned space between building spaces with limited sight lines increases liability issues for pedestrian throughfare.

As Part of the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail:

- Access from downtown's alleys/laneways.
- Shared space for all modes of traffic requires safety controls.
- Privately owned space between building spaces requires partnership.

2.5 Trail Segment Evaluation

When determining the most feasible and preferred potential trail segments, it is important to consider the challenges that may arise at various stages of the project including but not limited to construction, use, and impacts. Each proposed segment was evaluated against four sets of attributes that were identified as important considerations to stakeholder groups and members of the community during the public engagement sessions. Considerations included Accessibility, Experience of Place, Connectedness and Benefits/Impacts, each of which were broken down into subcategories as described in the following section.



2.5.0

Trail Evaluation Criteria

Recognizing that some challenges are easier to overcome than others, segments, as they relate to their attributes, were ranked in degrees of challenge, from least (green) to most (red) challenging (Figure 22-25). After all proposed trail segments were evaluated, a preferred / recommended route was chosen based on feasibility, apparent challenges, and functional necessity (Figure 29-33).

2.5.1 Accessibility

Universal accessibility promotes that natural and recreational trails should be able to meet a variety of needs and interests. Natural areas pose challenges, but wherever practical the proposed trails should provide appropriate accessibility for those of all abilities. As such, each trail segment was divided into categories reflecting meeting a minimum AODA guideline; its potential for multi-use; and the potential for specialized seasonal use.

Potential for AODA Compliance – This category refers to the ability for this trail to have AODA potential while recognizing that specific design and detailing will be needed to accommodate AODA compliance for each section. To keep Erin's Riverwalk Trails accessible, the Trail segments were evaluated to determine if the segment had the potential to meet the AODA guidelines. If so, the trail would be ranked green; if some modifications were required, it would be ranked yellow, and if the segment posed multiple challenges (eg. steep slopes) it was ranked red.

Potential for Multi-Use – Accommodating and planning for multiple user groups is a challenging but important consideration for trail construction. This category refers to the potential for the proposed trail to accommodate both pedestrians and cyclists. Trail condition and width are primary factors to determine if a trail can be multi-use. Trails on roads are more accommodating; boardwalk trails less so.

Potential for 'Specialized' Seasonal Use – Given the area's climate, and links with the Elora Cataract Trail, thought must be put into whether the trail segment has the potential to accommodate and include user groups that are typically 'restricted'. These groups may include snow mobiles and equestrian use.

2.5.2 Experience of Place

Recognizing that even the most well-constructed and well-outfitted trails have the potential to be unsuccessful if they do not address user experience, our evaluation criteria took into consideration five subcategories of 'Experience of Place'. These included attributes encompassing both visual, interpretive and ecological values.

Physical Adjacency to Water – Being that the general purpose of this assessment is to address the feasibility of a "riverwalk" trail, it is important to consider trail segments that maximize physical adjacency to water. This allows users to most effectively take advantage of their proximity to the bodies of water existing throughout their community.

Visual Connection to Water – Understanding that the trail might not always be able to run alongside rivers or lakes due to various constraints, a visual connection to water may be just as affective at contributing to a positive experience of place. Trail segments were evaluated against the ability to create/open up choice views to water where possible.

Natural or Cultural Interpretive Value – The Town of Erin has a lot to offer in terms of ecological, natural and cultural heritage, therefore segments that take advantage of areas allowing for interpretive value were preferred. Successful segments provide the opportunity, through use of information kiosks and interpretive panels, for users to learn and become familiar with all that the Town of Erin has to offer.

Positive Aesthetic Quality – Positive aesthetic quality is the overall general appeal of a segment, but should not be confused with visual connection to water. This subcategory refers to the overall field of vision on both sides of the trail and must recognize that some of the most positive views may be paralleled with some of the least appealing.

Apparent Ecological Value – An assessment of the study area found that the Town of Erin is diverse in terms of habitat and land cover. Therefore, trail segments should take advantage of, while being sensitive to, species, habitats, and natural areas. Segments running through and alongside wetlands, forests, marshes, and riverbanks represent areas of high ecological value.

2.5.3 Connectedness

A well thought out trail alignment for the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail provides an opportunity to create connections both within the community and with other municipalities in the County. Through collaboration with stakeholders the proposed alignment could provide access points to the river, connect to existing trail networks, provide connections to downtown, and bring visitors into the community.

Connection to Surrounding Network – Trails are often more successful if they connect to a wider network that provides ease of access for all users including residents and those outside the community (visitors). Connections can be maximized by merging with pre-existing trails or providing a clear and efficient way for users to interact with the town's amenities, businesses and ultimately their economy.

Physical Adjacency to Private Land – Special consideration must be taken when a proposed trail runs through or adjacent to private land. This often raises concerns to property owners about issues such as safety, noise, and vandalism. However, if proper lines of communication are open and all stakeholders remain transparent, negotiations can be made that benefit all groups while gaining necessary support from the community.

Existing Infrastructure – Where there is already infrastructure present, like roads, lanes and sidewalks, trail construction can be simple and cost effective. Other times there are distinct desire lines that indicate where people are already travelling, making trail orientation and placement simple despite what may be a higher cost. The most challenging situation can occur in areas with no existing infrastructure, but where trail placement would be aesthetically and functionally necessary.



2.5.4 Benefits/Impacts

There are pros and cons to any type of development. However, it is important to properly understand the extent of the benefits and impacts that are incurred through construction of each possible trail segment, as well as being cognizant that certain trade-offs will incur.

Environmental – When measuring environmental impacts one must take into consideration how the actual construction of the trail may have initial impact on floodplains, habitats, and environmentally sensitive areas. This category is independent of the fact that trail construction in sensitive areas may bring about the greatest experience of place accompanied by high levels of natural interpretive value.

Capital Costs – In this situation capital costs refers to the total cost of each segment of the trail per linear metre. It must be recognized that some trail types (e.g. boardwalks) may cost more than others (e.g. use of an existing sidewalk) but where proposed, they are required in order to maintain the ecological integrity of the surrounding landscape. The initial capital costs may be offset by the positive user experience brought about by its use.

Apparentness – It is important for trail users to be confident that they are on the trail and have not veered off track. Apparentness refers to how visibly apparent a trail segment would be if it were to be constructed in that area. The most apparent (least challenging) would be something like a boardwalk in a wetland, while the least apparent (most challenging) refers to when the trail merges with a road. The latter may bring about confusion about the continued direction of the trail. This can be mitigated through use of proper signage, markings and wayfinding features.

Erin [A] Evaluation		Proposed Trail Segments										
		Segment: 1 - Elora Cataract Trail Connection	2 - Overland Drive	3 - Stanley Park Entrance*	4 - Stanley Bridge*	5 - Historical Loop	6 - Carolyn Crescent	7 - Main Street*	8 - Sunnyside Drive	9 - Stanley Dam Boardwalk	10 - Carberry Park Loop	
Attribute:												
Feasibility / Evaluation Criteria	Accessibility											
	Potential for AODA Compliance											
	Potential for Multi-Use ¹											
	Potential for 'Specialized' Seasonal Use ²											
	Experience of Place											
	Physical Adjacency to Water											
	Visual Connection to Water											
	Natural or Cultural Interpretive Value											
	Positive Aesthetic Quality											
	Apparent Ecological Value											
	Connectedness											
	Connection to Surrounding Network											
	Physical Adjacency to Private Land											
	Existing Infrastructure ³											
	Benefits/Impacts											
	Environmental											
	Capital Costs											
	Apparentness											



Least Challenging



Challenging



Most Challenging

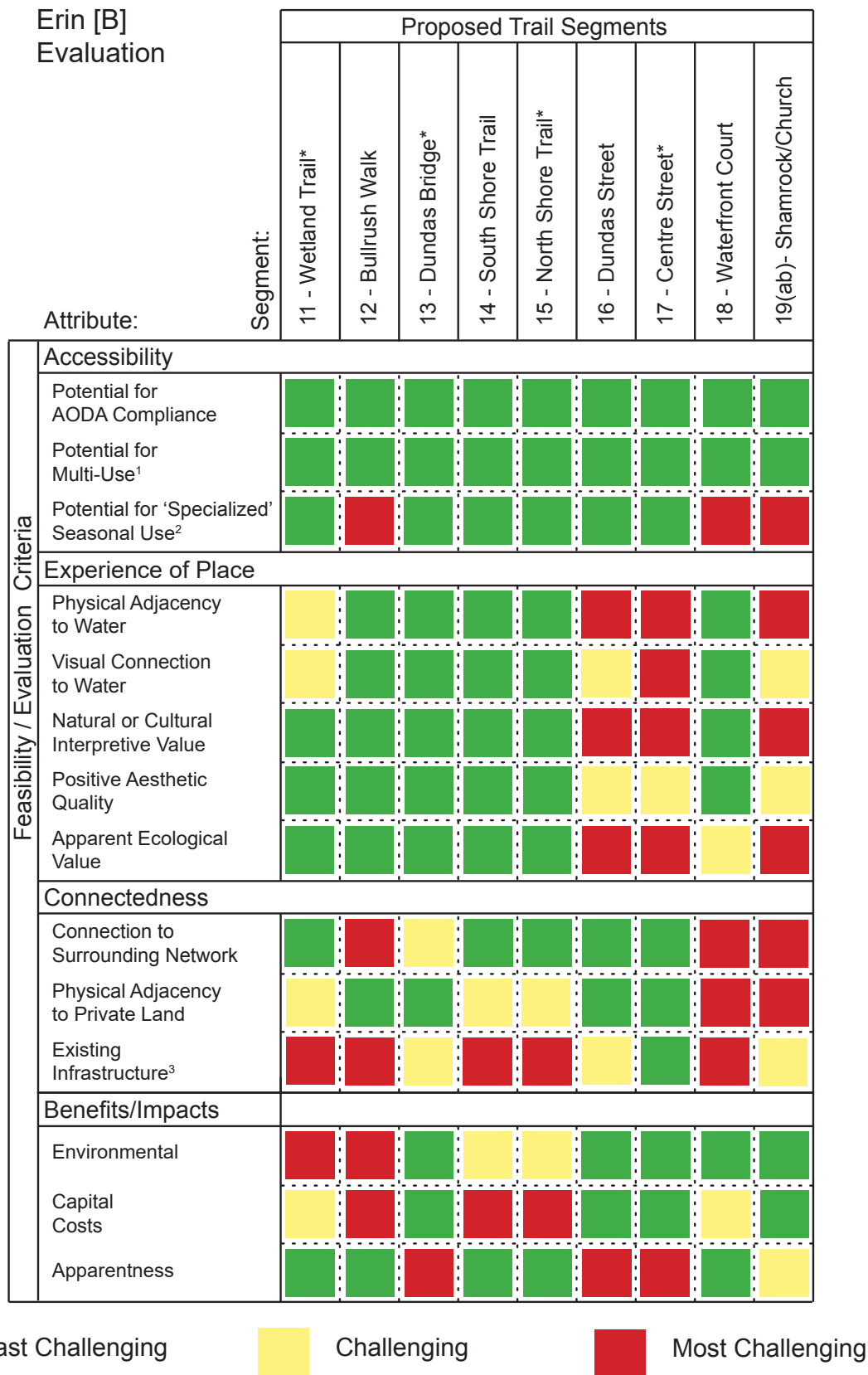
*Proposed Wellington County Active Transportation route.

¹ Multi-Use includes pedestrian & cycle;

² Seasonal Use - typically 'restricted' use and may include equestrian / snowmobile use, etc.;

³ Includes adjacency to infrastructure such as roadways, sidewalks, gravel shoulders, etc.; most challenging (red) has no infrastructure to use for trail development.

Figure 22: Segment Evaluation Chart - Erin [A]



*Proposed Wellington County Active Transportation route.

¹ Multi-Use includes pedestrian & cycle;

² Seasonal Use - typically 'restricted' use and may include equestrian / snowmobile use, etc.;

³ Includes adjacency to infrastructure such as roadways, sidewalks, gravel shoulders, etc.; most challenging (red) has no infrastructure to use for trail development.

Figure 23: Segment Evaluation Chart - Erin [B]

Erin [C] Evaluation		Proposed Trail Segments												
		Segment:	20 - Churchill Dam	21 - Riverside Park Trail	22 - Park Trail extension	23 - Riverfront Gardens	24 - Downtown Laneway Loop	25 - West Lane	26 - East Lane	27 - Main St. / Charles St. Dam Connection*	28 - Lower Pond West Trail	29 - Charles Street	30 - Charles St. Extended Trail	31 - Lower Pond East Trail
Attribute:														
Feasibility / Evaluation Criteria	Accessibility													
	Potential for AODA Compliance													
	Potential for Multi-Use ¹													
	Potential for 'Specialized' Seasonal Use ²													
	Experience of Place													
	Physical Adjacency to Water													
	Visual Connection to Water													
	Natural or Cultural Interpretive Value													
	Positive Aesthetic Quality													
	Apparent Ecological Value													
	Connectedness													
	Connection to Surrounding Network													
	Physical Adjacency to Private Land													
	Existing Infrastructure ³													
	Benefits/Impacts													
	Environmental													
	Capital Costs													
	Apparentness													



Least Challenging



Challenging



Most Challenging

*Proposed Wellington County Active Transportation route.

¹ Multi-Use includes pedestrian & cycle;² Seasonal Use - typically 'restricted' use and may include equestrian / snowmobile use, etc.;³ Includes adjacency to infrastructure such as roadways, sidewalks, gravel shoulders, etc.; most challenging (red) has no infrastructure to use for trail development.

Figure 24: Segment Evaluation Chart - Erin [C]

Hillsburgh Evaluation

Hillsburgh Evaluation		Proposed Trail Segments											
		Segment:	1 -West Trail	2 - George St.	3 - George St. Loop	4a - Bullrush Lookout	4b - Bullrush Lookout	5 - Trafalgar Rd.	6 - Upper Station St.	7 - Northside Pond	8 - Station St. Bridge	9 - Library Lookout	10 - Lower Station St.
Feasibility / Evaluation Criteria	Attribute:												
	Accessibility												
	Potential for AODA Compliance												
	Potential for Multi-Use ¹												
	Potential for 'Specialized' Seasonal Use ²												
	Experience of Place												
	Physical Adjacency to Water												
	Visual Connection to Water												
	Natural or Cultural Interpretive Value												
	Positive Aesthetic Quality												
	Apparent Ecological Value												
	Connectedness												
	Connection to Surrounding Network												
	Physical Adjacency to Private Land												
	Existing Infrastructure ³												
	Benefits/Impacts												
	Environmental												
	Capital Costs												
	Apparentness												



Least Challenging



Challenging



Most Challenging

*Proposed Wellington County Active Transportation route.

¹ Multi-Use includes pedestrian & cycle;

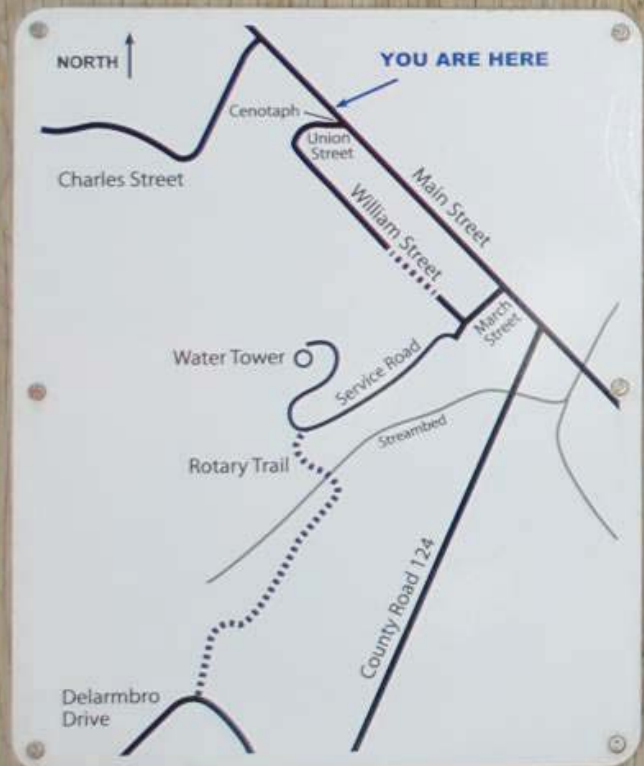
² Seasonal Use - typically 'restricted' use and may include equestrian / snowmobile use, etc.;

³ Includes adjacency to infrastructure such as roadways, sidewalks, gravel shoulders, etc.; most challenging (red) has no infrastructure to use for trail development.

Figure 25: Segment Evaluation Chard - Hillsburgh

2.6 Open House Review

ERIN TRAILS



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**FOLLOW THE
SHAMROCKS
ON THE TRAILS**

Thanks to our
supporters:





2.6.1 Open House Write-Up

Understanding the importance of involving the community and various stakeholders in the planning process an Open House was held on July 13th 2016 to present on progress made on the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail. Erin Centre 2000 was lined with panels showcasing the overall purpose of the project, the opportunities and constraints facing trail development and implementation, as well as visual demonstrations of possible trail segments. Participants had the opportunity to engage with design consultants and provide their feedback on the proposed trail. Through the use of questionnaires and visual handouts, participants were asked to express their level of satisfaction and provide any general comments or concerns they may have regarding the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail.

With both communities well represented, the feedback was analyzed and taken into consideration moving forward. The main concerns that arose were cost of the project, ensuring that land adjacency issues with the trail and private land owners were addressed and resolved, as well as ensuring that the design maximizes potential, suits and complements the charm and amenities present in the Town of Erin. In general, the open house and deliverables were well received by community members and stakeholders. Some results include:

- Over 90% of respondents said that either they or their family would use the proposed trail;
- Over 85% agree that the proposed trail is well connected to the existing trail networks and provides opportunity for a variety of users with different abilities;
- 100% of the respondents agree that the trail provides an opportunity for nature interpretation; and
- Over 85% of participants believe that the creation of this trail would promote and increase the Town of Erin's appeal as a destination for visitors.



3.0

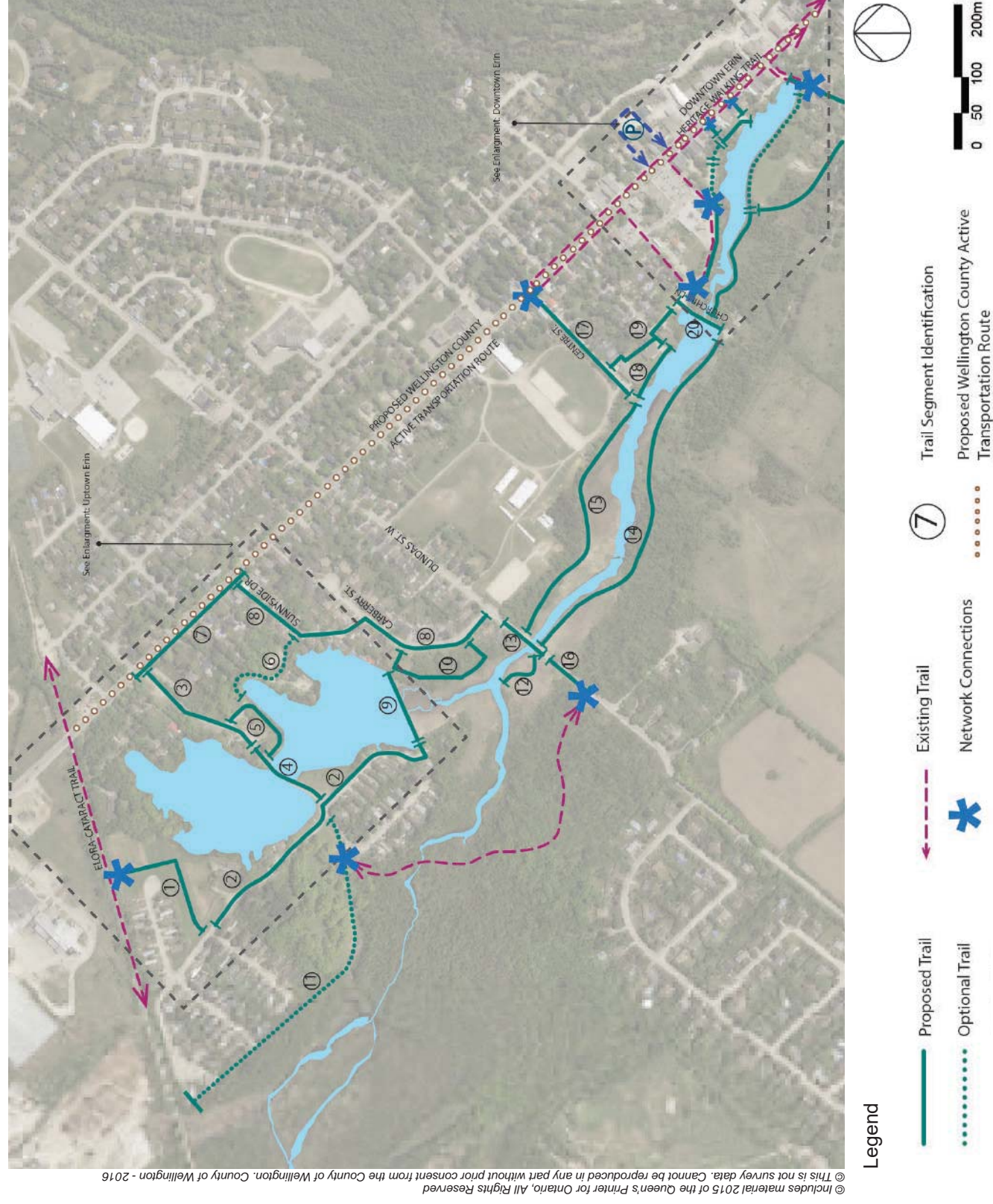
Recommended Trail Alignment

This chapter describes the characteristics, challenges and considerations of each segment within the trail circuits that may potentially comprise the Rotary Riverwalk Trail.

3.1 Segment Descriptions



The following sections describes how each previously identified and evaluated trail segment could fit within the Erin Riverwalk Rotary Trail system. The descriptions encompass segment length, possible amenities, general characteristics and challenges and considerations that need to be taken for each segment to be feasible.





3.1.3 Erin Segment Descriptions

Legend:

WB – Waste Bin
B – Bench
BR – Bike Rack
IK – Information Kiosk
IP – Interpretive Panel
TS – Trail Sign
BL – Bike Lane Markup
PF – Privacy Fencing
LP – Lookout Platform

1 Elora-Cataract Trail Connection

Length: 250m

Amenities (1 WB, 3 B, 1 IK, 2 IP, 2 TS)

Description:

Maximizing opportunities for making network connections, this segment of the trail proposes to branch off from the Elora-Cataract Trail at a proposed Trailhead Marker/Information Kiosk. This junction, lined with benches, provides existing and new trail users the opportunity to explore trails encompassing the Stanley Park Ponds and extending through and alongside the West Credit River. This 250m limestone segment, in collaboration with opening up choice views, provides users with their first glance at Stanley Park Ponds.

Challenges / Considerations:

Special consideration needs to be taken to address or acknowledge grade changes in regards to AODA requirements as well as any implications that come with the proximity to the septic bed and private land owner concerns.

2 Overland Drive

Length: 495m

Amenities (BL, 3 B, 3 TS)

Description:

Existing road infrastructure provides this link along the ponds edge. Views of the pond and bridge provide a glimpse of the ponds history as a key amenity for the Town of Erin. Wayfinding messaging (trail markers) will help direct trail users to the adjoining sections of the trail.

Challenges / Considerations:

This section of trail has minimal requirements in terms of trail 'infrastructure' as it is



making use of the existing road way. Given the lack of sidewalks, safety messaging along with directional signage will be important. Shoulder widening to support a roadside trail is possible along the park side of the road, however, negotiations with Stanley Park management will be required for access and trail marking.

3 **Stanley Park Entrance**

Length: 220m

Amenities (BL, 1 WB, 2 B, 1 BR, 1 IK, 1 IP, 2 TS)

Description:

Taking advantage of the character and history of the existing Stanley Park entrance gate, this segment of the trail proposes to utilize this space as a staging area complete with parking, an information kiosk, benches, bike racks, interpretive panels and signage. As the lane continues 220m towards Stanley Park Ponds the trail takes the form of a shared, multi-use road.

Challenges / Considerations:

Negotiations with Stanley Park management required for this segment of the trail development. Safety signs for shared roadway (with pedestrians and bikes) are needed.

4 **Stanley Bridge**

Length: 140m

Amenities (BL, 1 TS)

Description:

The 140m segment encompassing Stanley Bridge is a single lane throughfare providing views of both Stanley Park Upper Pond and Stanley Park Lower Pond.

Challenges / Considerations:

Special consideration needs to be given to road widths and barriers to ensure safe bridge crossing for all. Negotiations with Stanley Park management required for this segment of the trail development.



5 Historical Loop

Length: 165m

Amenities (3 B, 3 IP, 1 TS)

Description:

This 165m loop off of the Stanley Park entrance provides users with a diverse experience that features a historic foundation, interpretive panels, and benches to enjoy the solitude of this quiet inlet.

Challenges / Considerations:

Negotiations with Stanley Park management required for this segment of the trail development.

6 Carolyn Crescent

Length: 195m

Amenities (4 TS)

Description:

Carolyn Crescent is a well-treed lane that terminates at a cul-de-sac of waterfront cottages. It also acts as an access route for a septic field. The route provides a possible shortcut to Carberry Park through the backyards of a few cottage properties, therefore eliminating travel back up to Main Street.

Challenges / Considerations:

This short connecting route has many challenges. Negotiations with property owners would be required for access between properties. The trail would traverse a moderately steep slope that is not universally accessible. Gradual retaining steps (eg.log or timber risers with gravel treads) would accommodate a more comfortable walking route. Fencing and buffer planting should be considered for privacy and safety.



7 **Main St.**

Length: 220m

Amenities (BL, 2 TS)

Description:

Main Street, a busy vehicular throughfare, has existing sidewalks and streetlights. It is also identified as a primary bike route in the Wellington County Active Transportation Plan. The Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail merges with Main Street creating a 220m shared roadway maximizing an important connection between users and adjacent neighbourhoods. Those unfamiliar with Erin are introduced to the character of the town by passing by both modern and century homes.

Challenges / Considerations:

As an existing roadway, there is opportunity for a shared bike lane on the road. Directional and trail signs will be important to direct users back into the Riverwalk Trail system.

8 **Sunnyside Dr.**

Length: 495m

Amenities (BL, 4 TS)

Description:

Sunnyside Drive is a narrow paved lane that serves a more intimate residential neighbourhood dominated by older cottages. As part of the Riverside Trail, it is the main route from Main Street back towards the Credit River. With no sidewalks one must share the road with vehicles and bike circulation.

Challenges / Considerations:

With no room for sidewalks, user safety is a main concern. Both directional and safety signs will be required. Shared route markings on the road and on signs will be important messages to include for overall safety.



9 Stanley Dam Boardwalk

Length: 110m

Amenities (2B, 4 IP, 1 TS)

Legend:

WB – Waste Bin

B – Bench

BR – Bike Rack

IK – Information Kiosk

IP – Interpretive Panel

TS – Trail Sign

BL – Bike Lane Markup

PF – Privacy Fencing

LP – Lookout Platform

Description:

This earth dam supports a well-worn dirt path as a popular shortcut over the river, connecting the user to the interior of the park without having to go back up to Main Street. With excellent views west to the Stanley Park ponds and east towards the Credit River wetlands, this vantage point serves as a prime destination along the Riverfront Trail, and offers a more intimate experience of the river's environment.

Challenges / Considerations:

As a watercourse crossing, formalizing the worn path into a boardwalk trail with lookouts will require consultation with the Credit River Conservation Authority, as well as further specialized professional design services for concept development and implementation drawings. As a destination node, the opportunity for interpretation, viewing, fishing and resting will define the programming for this important network connector.

10 Carberry Park Loop

Length: 250m

Amenities (1 WB, 2 B, 1 BR, 1 IK, 2 TS)

Description:

As an alternative to walking directly to Sunnyside Drive from the Stanley Park Dam boardwalk, this short connector takes the user along the forest edge, and around the neighbourhood park. With it's proximity to the pond and the quiet residential road, the park offers an opportunity for a staging area for trail users, bringing a new vitality and programming into this somewhat unused neighbourhood park.

Challenges / Considerations:

Minimal challenges in this trail section. User safety, open sightlines and wayfinding signage are required.

11 **Wetland Trail**

Length: 550m

Amenities (3 B, 3 TS)

Description:

This optional and alternative connection to the Elora Cataract Trail follows along the West Credit River along the south side of Stanley Park.

Challenges / Considerations:

With minimal paths and desire lines existing, this new section of trail will bring the trail user through some untouched natural environments. Due to the proximity to wetland conditions, this section of the trail will need to be located on site with direction from the CVC to limit impacts on natural habitat. Required setbacks may be prohibitive for granular trails and more costly boardwalks would most likely be needed to meet CVC guidelines.

12 **Bullrush Walk**

Length: 85m

Amenities (1WB, 3 B, 1 BR, 3 IP, 2 TS)

Description:

Noted by many stakeholders and community members, this prime bird watching area is an important natural asset for Erin. The proposed 85m long boardwalk offers a quick refuge to immerse users in the local wetland. Integrating amenities such as interpretive panels, waste bins, bike racks, and benches, this space offers a great spot to come and relax and appreciate the town's ecological value.

Challenges / Considerations:

As a prime wetland zone, coordination and consultation with CVC will be required for the development of the boardwalk. Safe access from the road will need to be considered, as will accessibility standards.

13 **Dundas Bridge**

Length: 85m

Amenities (BL, 1 TS)

Description:

The existing Dundas Street bridge, with no room for expansion in terms of width, connects the north and south sides of the Credit River, and is a necessary trail segment to complete a circular route around the river.

Challenges / Considerations:

With limited options for trail accommodation, safety messaging (signs and road markings) for both trail users and drivers will be important to render safe passage over the bridge.

14 **South Shore Trail**

Length: 605m

Amenities (PF, 3 B, 2 IP, 3 TS)

Description:

Adjacent to the West Credit River this segment contains an existing path that extends to the gate of the Wellington County Landfill site. This section of the trail provides a fully accessible multi-use route that is integral to providing a continuous circuit around the river. With attractive views and riverside location on the high side of the river bank, this trail segment offers a positive riverside experience.

Challenges / Considerations:

Negotiations with private land owners (eg. Wellington County re. access to decommissioned landfill site) required. This section with only a few but manageable challenges, has high potential for trail development.

15 **North Shore Trail**

Length: 440m

Amenities (PF, 2 WB, 4 B, 3 IP, 3 TS)

Description:

Similar in character to the South Shore trail segment, the North Shore segment runs along the town side of the river, and forms a key component of the system connecting the Downtown circuit with the Stanley Park circuit, and ultimately the Elora Cataract trail.

Challenges / Considerations

Negotiations with private land owners (e.g. Erin Agricultural Fair Ground re. access to riverfront lands) is required. This section with only a few but manageable challenges, has high potential for trail development. The optimum location for the trail will be on the high side of the river bank to limit trail degradation from the river. Should the trail be located on the low side of the riverbank, a boardwalk and consequent CVC involvement will be required. River clean up (debris, dead trees, overgrown plant and vines etc) will be required to provide an optimal riverside experience.

16 **Dundas Street**

Length: 55m

Amenities (BL, 1 TS)

Description:

This small segment of roadside trail compliments the Rotary Riverwalk Trail as a connecting element with the existing woodland trails. Opportunity exists along the road for an off road parking and trail staging area to serve both the Bullrush Walk and the Credit River circuit.

Challenges / Considerations:

Negotiations with private landowners required to secure land required for roadside parking area.

Legend:

WB – Waste Bin

B – Bench

BR – Bike Rack

IK – Information Kiosk

IP – Interpretive Panel

TS – Trail Sign

BL – Bike Lane Markup

PF – Privacy Fencing

LP – Lookout Platform



17 **Centre St.**

Length: 220m

Amenities (BL, 2 TS)

Description:

Should access along the riverfront at Shamrock Court and Waterfront Court not be possible, this bypass route along Centre Street will connect the riverfront section of trail with the downtown core. This bypass, although out of the way, will provide users direct access to the downtown via Main Street, (a proposed Active Transportation Route) or they can return back down to the river on Churchill Street.

Challenges / Considerations:

Wayfinding signage and trail markers integral for route selection.

18 **Waterfront Ct.**

Length: 110m

Amenities (PF, 2 B, 2 IP, 2 TS)

Description:

Located along the river in front of 2 multi-unit apartment buildings, this trail section provides a valuable direct link between the downtown trail circuit and the Credit River trail circuit.

Challenges / Considerations:

Concerns re. privacy, safety, vandalism, and liability will need to be addressed (security fencing and buffer planting) during negotiations for trail development.

19a **Shamrock Sidewalk**

Length: 55m
Amenities (2 TS)

Description:

This alternative route to the Waterfront Court Trail segment, connects Church Boulevard with Centre Street and subsequent North Shore Trail and Agricultural grounds, with an existing concrete sidewalk.

Challenges / Considerations:

Concerns re. privacy, safety, vandalism, and liability will need to be addressed during negotiations for trail development. Trail routing along the riverfront (ie the Waterfront Ct. segment) is preferable to maintain private vs. guest/ public space.

19b **Church Boulevard**

Length: 40m
Amenities (2 TS)

Description:

This short segment is required to connect the downtown circuit at Churchill Street with the Credit River circuit. Use of the existing roadway provides opportunity for an efficient connection.

Challenges / Considerations:

Without existing sidewalks, pedestrian safety is of concern. Appropriate directional and safety signage important for user well-being and orientation is required.

20 **Churchill Dam**

Length: 85m
Amenities (2 IP, 3 TS)

Description:

This bridge and dam offers a quaint river crossing with choice views of the river in both directions. The road is a lightly travelled gravel lane at best, used as a primary access to a few residences across the river, and is essentially, a dead end. However, it will serve as a main river crossing for both the Credit River Circuit and the Downtown Circuit.

Challenges / Considerations:

Future bridge or dam repairs / or renovations should be considered in terms of trail accommodation. Safety and directional signs along with interpretive panels highlighting the dam as an important cultural asset are recommended.

21 **Riverside Park Trail**

Length: 195m
Amenities (LP, 1 WB, 4 B, 1 BR, 5 IP, 2 TS)

Description:

This roadside trail route, alongside the grocery store parking lot and service yard, is a primary riverside walk on the north side of the downtown circuit. It includes the existing Rotary Riverside Park, which functions as a rest stop and secondary staging area for trail users. With a few select views of the river, this trail offers

Legend:

WB – Waste Bin

B – Bench

BR – Bike Rack

IK – Information Kiosk

IP – Interpretive Panel

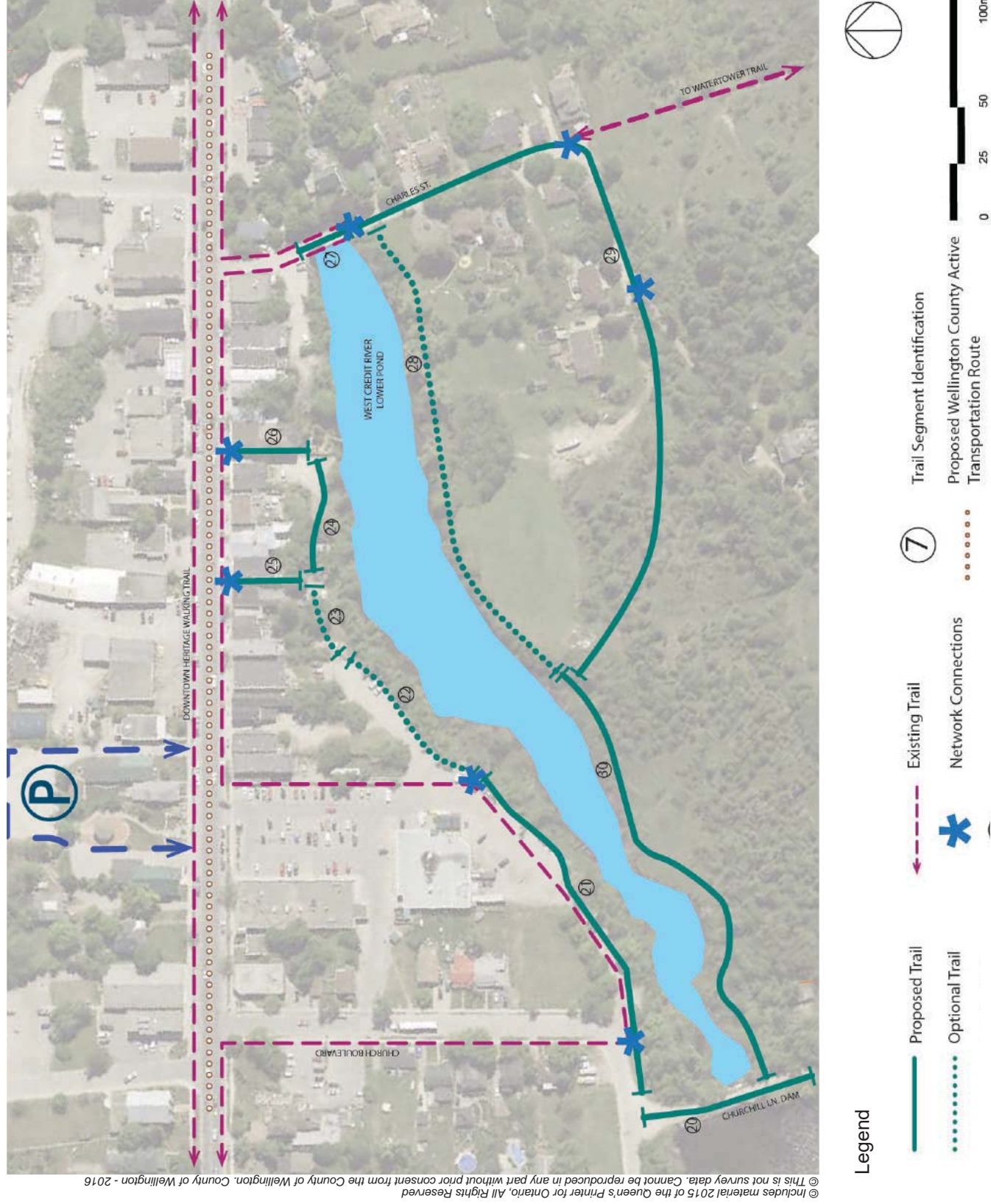
TS – Trail Sign

BL – Bike Lane Markup

PF – Privacy Fencing

LP – Lookout Platform

Figure 27: Possible Trail Segments
Downtown Erin



a short accessible segment for a range of user groups. Opportunities for a well furnished lookout deck with a focus towards the Charles Street Dam will give the trail user a close-up riverside experience without having to complete the whole trail.

Challenges / Considerations:

Adjacency to the parking and service yard pose safety concerns for the trail users and vehicular traffic. Safety bollards and high contrast road markings for the trail will be an important design consideration. The riverside along this edge will require remediation in terms of debris clean up, tree pruning and view expansion.

22 **Park Trail Extension**

Length: 90m

Amenities (2 B, 1 TS)

Description:

Sections 22, 23 and 24, although each having their own challenges as noted below, will collectively form an extension of the Riverside Park Trail (#21) that will follow the river to the heart of Erin's downtown. An optional downtown by-pass through the parking lot, though not an ideal experience, will serve as an alternative route for the downtown circuit.

Challenges / Considerations:

This section, though currently accessible with only a few challenges in regards to property ownership, will only function in conjunction with section 23 as a throughfare to section 24. Concerns centre on conflict between pedestrian and vehicular use.

23 **Riverfront Gardens**

Length: 45m

Amenities (PF, 1TS)

Description:

This short trail connection along the property line of a few residential properties is the key to secure a complete riverside route within the downtown core.

Challenges / Considerations:

Negotiations with property owners will be imperative to securing this section of the trail. Concerns include privacy, liability, vandalism and security for both property owners and the Town.

24 **Downtown Laneway Loop**

Length: 65m

Amenities (LP, 2 WB, 3 B, 1 BR, 3 IP, 2 TS)

Description:

Capitalizing on an open and accessible riverfront, this section offers a unique experience that has a distinct urban character. Proximity to some popular dining locations in town (the bakery and bistro) as well as the vehicular laneways, the trail has an opportunity to encourage pedestrian circulation toward the river, and expand the downtown environment towards the riverfront, taking full advantage of Erin's location on the West Credit River. Lookout platforms and seating nodes will compliment the walking trail, and a full range of trail furnishings (seating,

Legend:

WB – Waste Bin

B – Bench

BR – Bike Rack

IK – Information Kiosk

IP – Interpretive Panel

TS – Trail Sign

BL – Bike Lane Markup

PF – Privacy Fencing

LP – Lookout Platform



bike racks, information and map kiosk, interpretative panels, wayfinding, waste receptacles etc) will complete this section.

Challenges / Considerations:

Back of building concerns in terms of aesthetic appeal and vehicular and pedestrian circulation conflicts remain key considerations. Negotiation with property owners will be required to ensure the success along this section.

25 West Lane

Length: 40m

Amenities (BL, 1 TS)

Description:

This single lane shared alley provides one of two paved access portals to the riverfront.

Challenges / Considerations:

Visually unappealing, this alley has safety issues in terms of circulation conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. Narrow sight lines, and service function pose design challenges in terms of promoting a positive experience for the user.

26 East Lane

Length: 45m

Amenities (BL, 1 TS)

Description:

This single lane shared alley provides one of two paved access portals to the riverfront.

Challenges / Considerations:

Visually unappealing, this alley has safety issues in terms of circulation conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles. Narrow sight lines, and service function pose design challenges in terms of promoting a positive experience for the user.



Legend:

WB – Waste Bin
B – Bench
BR – Bike Rack
IK – Information Kiosk
IP – Interpretive Panel
TS – Trail Sign
BL – Bike Lane Markup
PF – Privacy Fencing
LP – Lookout Platform

27a Main St.

Length: 670m
Amenities (BL, IP, 9 TS)

Description:

The Riverwalk trail has an opportunity to encourage trail users to experience some of the downtown environment along this section.

Challenges / Considerations:

Wayfinding and trail identification will be important to maintain connections between the various trail options in the downtown core.

27b Charles St. Dam Connection

Description:

The Charles Street bridge and dam complete the trail loop on the east side of the downtown circuit before the river runs out of the downtown core. As an important historic feature of the town, the bridge and dam present a cultural experience that maintains a sense of place unique to the Town of Erin. Prominent views 'up-river' heighten the river experience. A visual connection to the lookout platform proposed on section #21, Riverside Park trail, provides an interesting opportunity for trail appreciation.

Challenges / Considerations:

As a secondary route, with limited residential traffic, vehicular / pedestrian conflict on the bridge is of minimal concern. Future dam / bridge repair should accommodate trail use.

28 **Lower Pond East Trail**

ska

Length: 250m

Amenities (2B, 1 TS)

Description:

To maintain a complete and optimal riverside experience, the trail has an opportunity to run along the full length of the river.

Challenges / Considerations:

Negotiations with private property owners will be required to secure this section of trail. Typical concerns for interface with a residential property include security, vandalism, liability and privacy. If promoted appropriately, this trail section could function as a key amenity for the Bed and Breakfast business.

29 **Charles St.**

Length: 195m

Amenities (BL, 3 TS)

Description:

As an alternative route, the trail continues along Charles Street to it's terminus.

Challenges / Considerations:

As part of a shared roadway without a sidewalk, minor considerations surround pedestrian and vehicular conflicts. There is an informal trail connection along this section to the Water Tower Trail that could be signed.

30 **Charles St. Extended Trail**

Length: 210m

Amenities (2B, 2 TS)

Description:

The trail continues through a more pastoral landscape along the perimeter of a private property to connect with the Lower Pond East Trail.

Challenges: Considerations:

Negotiations with private property owners will be required to secure this section of trail. Typical concerns for interface with a residential property include security, vandalism, liability and privacy.

31 **Lower Pond West Trail**

Length: 250m

Amenities (2B, 1 TS)

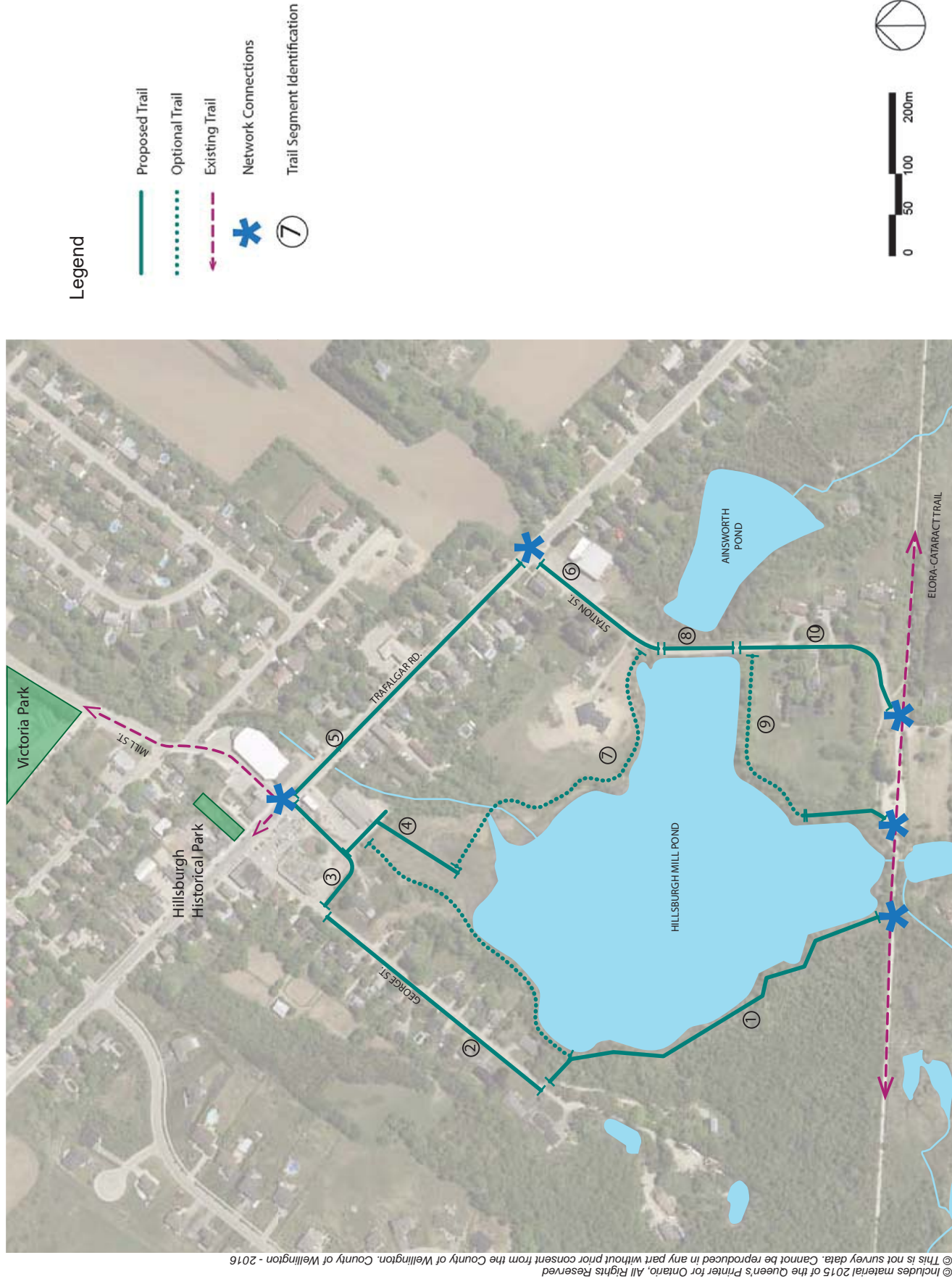
Description:

Bordering the western side of the West Credit River Lower Pond the multi-use trail meanders along the riverfront with open views across the river. Ideally, this trail should be part of a complete south shore route around the Lower Pond, with a connection to the Lower Pond East Trail (#28).

Challenges / Considerations:

Negotiations with private property owners (less apparent) will be required to secure this section of trail. Typical concerns for interface with a residential property includes security, vandalism, liability and privacy. Riverside clean up should be investigated to promote a positive river walk experience.

Figure 28: Possible Trail Segments
Hillsburgh





3.1.3 Hillsburgh Segment Descriptions

1 Hillsburgh Mill Pond

Length: 550m

Amenities (1 WB, 3 B, 1 IK, 3 IP, 4 TS)

Description:

Looking to take advantage of the appealing and diverse wetland environment, this multi-use segment, diverging from the Elora-Cataract Trail that includes a well-marked information kiosk, provides both pedestrians and cyclists a diverse and engaging experience. While travelling 550m along a constructed boardwalk (as per CVC policy for development on wetland zones), users have the opportunity learn about the ecological value of the space through interpretive panels or simply enjoy the scenery and appropriate vantage points while sitting along well-placed benches.

Challenges / Considerations:

Special considerations and consultation with CVC need to be taken to acknowledge and accommodate floodplain condition, species at risk, ecologically sensitive areas, and cost of construction. The exact location of this trail is subject to future conditions of the pond in respect to the impending restoration of the Station Street bridge and dam. Should the dam be removed, the location of the boardwalk will have more flexibility due to a diminished pond size, and altered wetland conditions. Negotiations with private landowners may be required along the length of the trail as well as where the proposed boardwalk trail merges with George St.

2 George St.

Length: 360m

Amenities (BL, 1 TS)

Description:

The Hillsburgh Mill Pond boardwalk merges with George Street creating a 360m



shared roadway maximizing an important multi-use connection between the natural pond environment and Hillsburgh's downtown core.

Challenges / Considerations:

Appropriate shared roadway markings are required given lack of sidewalk infrastructure.

Legend:

WB – Waste Bin
B – Bench
BR – Bike Rack
IK – Information Kiosk
IP – Interpretive Panel
TS – Trail Sign
BL – Bike Lane Markup
PF – Privacy Fencing

3 **George St. Loop**

Length: 165m

Amenities (BL, 2 TS)

Description:

The 165m George St. Loop serves as a continuation of the shared roadway connecting users with Trafalgar Road while allowing them first to visit the proposed Bullrush Lookout.

Challenges / Considerations:

A necessary link between the boardwalk and downtown, this stretch of trail will require specific attention to safety in consideration of delivery trucks and turning radii associated with the proximity to Foodland's service area. The general lack of aesthetic appeal along this service corridor is the main challenge for promoting a positive experience. This area would benefit from general initiatives found in Community Improvement Plans.

4a **Bullrush Lookout**

Length: 65m

Amenities (1 WB, 2 B, 1 BR, 2 IP, 1 TS)

Description:

This 65m limestone screening multi-use path, accented with benches, bike racks, information panels and waste bins, acts as a secondary staging area for the Riverwalk Trail in Hillsburgh. It allows users to enjoy the wetland from a distance prior to continuing along the proposed boardwalk.



Challenges / Considerations:

Drainage issues in this area contribute to a less desirable experience and requires amendment for this section of the trail to be successful. Coordination with future plans for the building will help to secure this area as a positive and welcome rest stop on the north side of the pond.

4b **Bullrush Lookout**

Length: 121m

Amenities (2 B, 2 IP)

Description:

Extending into the wetland from the limestone pathway is a 121 meter boardwalk creating a wetland trail weaving through a highly naturalized and ecologically sensitive area. This boardwalk, complete with benches and interpretive panels enables users to immerse themselves in the landscape and gain a unique vantage point looking across the Mill Pond towards the new County library site.

Challenges / Considerations:

Consultation with the CVC will be required in this wetland zone.

5 **Trafalgar Rd.**

Length: 440m

Amenities (BL, 2 TS)

Description:

Merging with Trafalgar Road, the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail extends 440m along and in close proximity to storefronts allowing users to take advantage of local businesses along this shared roadway.

Challenges / Considerations:

Adequate trail signage and road markings will be required so users are confident of the trail direction. Integration with future streetscape plans will support trail development in terms of furnishings and wayfinding.



6 Upper Station St.

Length: 195m

Amenities (BL, 2 TS)

Description:

The trail turns and continues down Station Street as it makes its way back around Hillsburgh Mill Pond. This 195m section, passes by Hillsburgh Community Christian Church and Theatre and the new fire hall before it reaches the Station St. Dam, acts as a shared roadway for a variety of user groups, and is also a much needed improvement for safe pedestrian access to the new Library.

Challenges / Considerations:

A new sidewalk will be required to connect the Town of Hillsburgh residents with the new Library. Plans should incorporate directional and trail marker signage. The road will also serve as a primary bicycle route and will require basic bike lane markings.

7 Northside Pond

Length: 430m

Amenities (2B, 2TS)

Description:

The northside pond section, consisting of both limestone trail and boardwalk, offers an alternative route around the pond, without direct access to the downtown core. Broad views of the pond environment are predominant here, with mostly unobstructed views to the opposite side of the pond.

Challenges / Considerations:

With limited available land for trail development, and the close proximity to private residential land, this section has some key challenges. The exact location of this trail is subject to future conditions of the pond in respect to the impending restoration of the Station Street bridge and dam. Should the dam be removed, the location of the trail and boardwalk will have more flexibility due to a diminished pond size, and altered wetland conditions. Given the visually open, conditions between the pond and the private land, negotiations with the landowners will be key to the success of this section of trail if it is to remain on the top of the bank.

Legend:

WB – Waste Bin

B – Bench

BR – Bike Rack

IK – Information Kiosk

IP – Interpretive Panel

TS – Trail Sign

BL – Bike Lane Markup

PF – Privacy Fencing

8 **Station St. Bridge**

ska

Length: 100m

Amenities (BL, 2 IP, 1 TS)

Description:

The proposed trail segment along Station Street Bridge provides a key vantage point for initial views across Mill Pond. For those visitors with limited time or mobility, a quick stop on the bridge will ensure that they will experience the best features of Mill Pond without having to continue around the whole trail. Future plans to accommodate trail users might include a wider sidewalk space for groups, interpretive panels to engage users on the ecological and cultural value of the pond, and appropriate directional and identification signage. Bike lanes and associated markings should also be considered along the bridge and tie in with bike markings on Station Street.

Challenges / Considerations:

With increased traffic to the new County library, upgrades to the bridge and dam will be required. The Environmental Assessment for the retrofit of the bridge and dam outline various development possibilities for consideration, each offering various levels of environmental impact. The various options for the bridge and dam may have different repercussions for the trail's routing along the ponds edge that should be revisited at that time. Coordinated efforts should be made during the retrofit of the bridge and dam to include supportive trail amenities such as lookouts, wayfinding, and interpretation opportunities. Until then, wayfinding and interpretation could be incorporated on the current bridge and re-used in the future.

9 **Library Lookout**

Length: 360m

Amenities (3 B, 1 BR 2 IP, 2TS)

Description:

This segment of the trail provides users with a 360m limestone screening path that meanders along the south east corner of the pond. Culturally significant as an old fishing portal for the pond, this segment, lined with benches, bike racks and interpretive panels has the opportunity to take advantage of adjacent library grounds before connecting back with the Elora-Cataract Trail.

Challenges / Considerations:

Discussion and proper collaboration with Wellington County will be required to make this segment possible, but it presents itself as potentially valuable component of the Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail.

10 **Lower Station St.**

Length: 275m

Amenities (BL, 2 TS)

Description:

As an alternative to the pond side Library Lookout, users also have the option to continue 275m along the shared roadway on the lower part of Station Street before merging at an additional junction with the Elora-Cataract Trail.

Challenges / Considerations:

A continuous sidewalk will benefit both trail use and library patrons. Discussions with Wellington County will ensure that trail amenities (wayfinding) are included along this alternative route.

A photograph of a dirt trail winding through a park. The trail is light-colored and leads from the foreground into the distance. On the left, there are several large, mature trees with thick trunks and bare branches, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting. The ground is covered in green grass. In the background, more trees and a clear blue sky are visible.

3.2 Recommended Circuits

The following section presents a recommended trail circuit based on the prior components that have made up this feasibility study. The characteristics of each circuit, including length and number of segments, is described in detail.

Figure 29: Recommended Trail Route
Erin Circuit

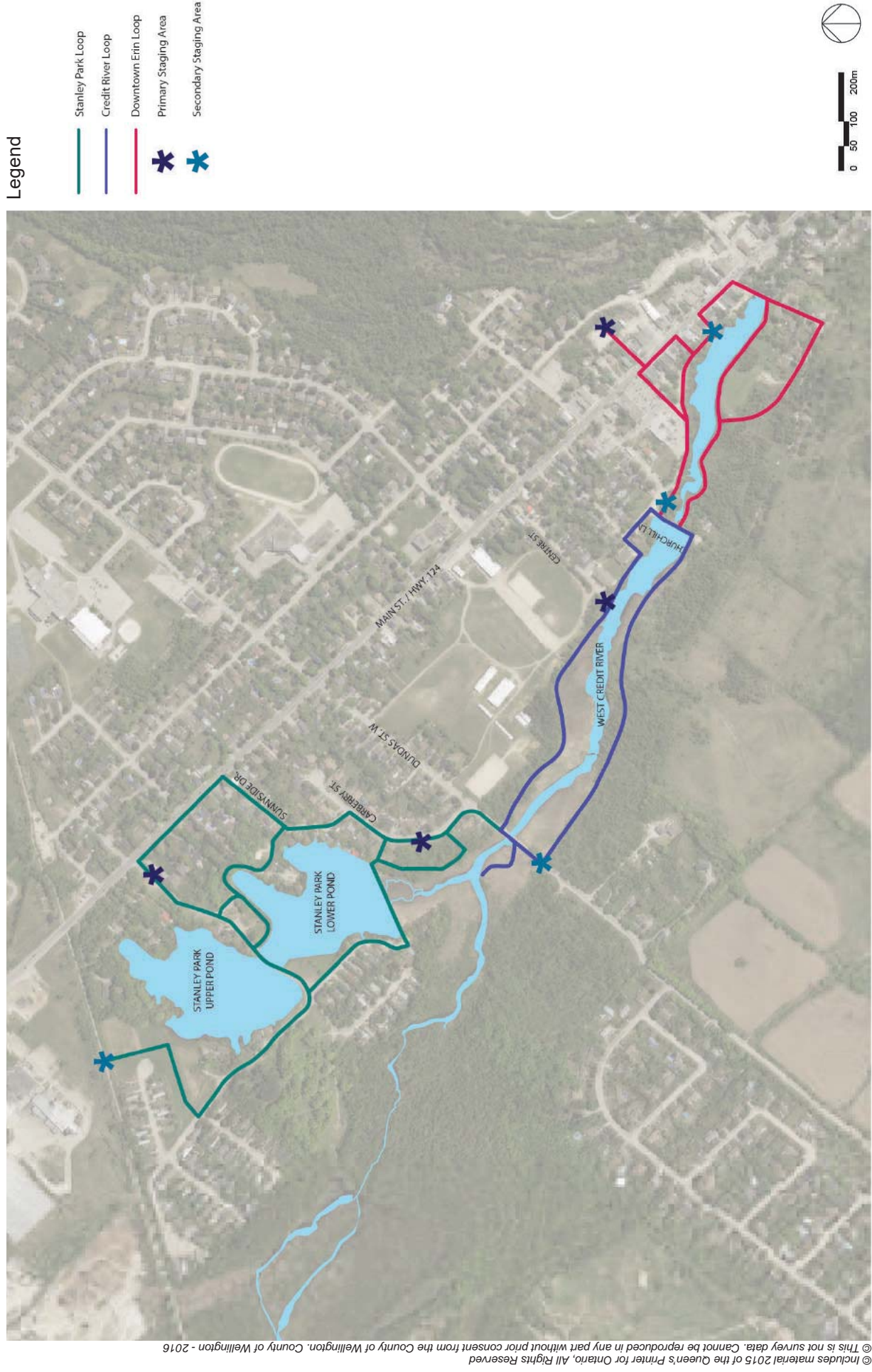
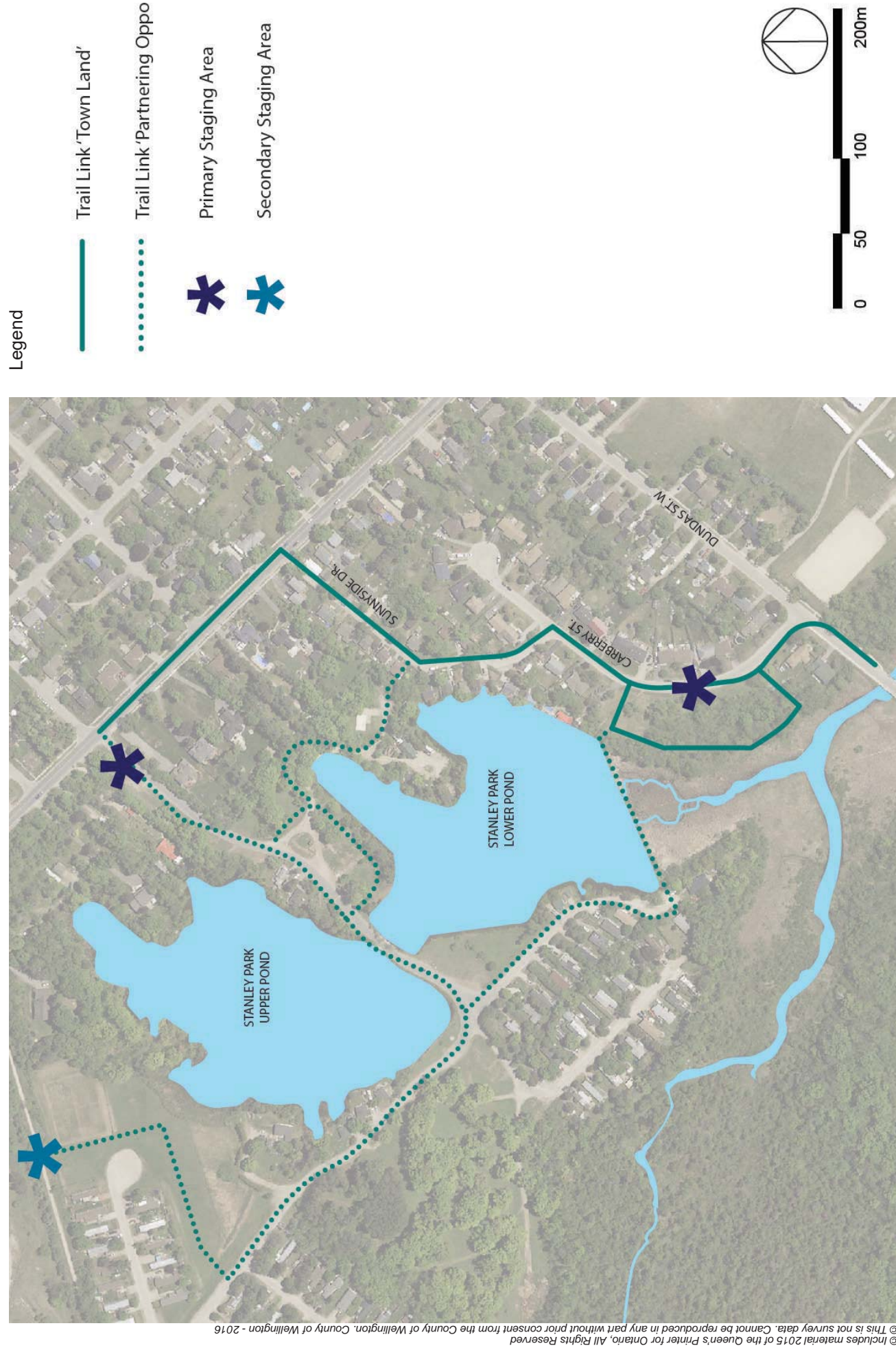


Figure 30: Recommended Trail Route
Stanley Park Circuit





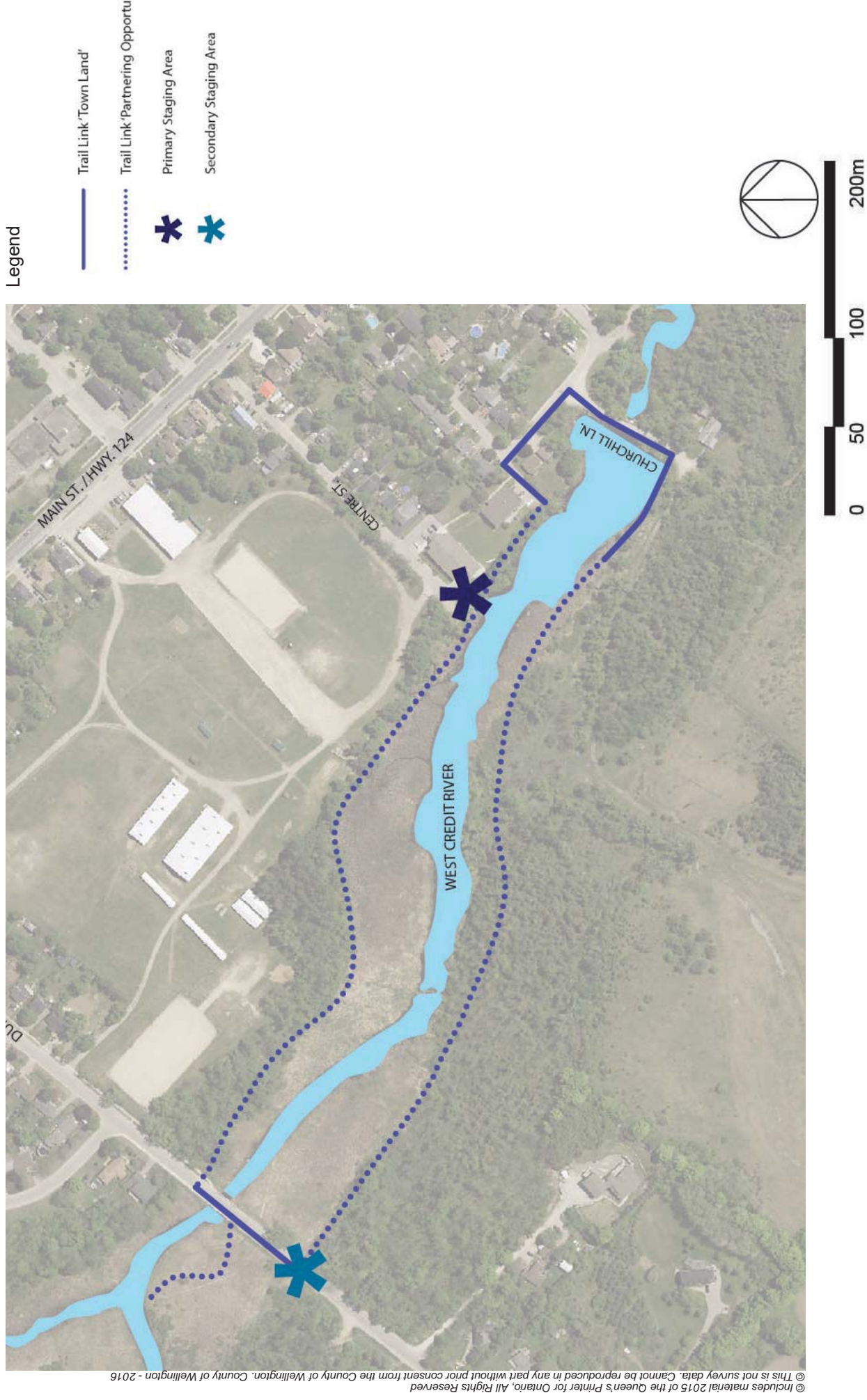
3.2.1 Stanley Park Circuit

2.5 kms; 10 segments; 1 dam and 1 bridge

General:

- With meandering lanes, cottages and natural ponds, the experience along this loop is one of passive reflection – a snapshot of Erin's history; a remnant of Erin as a summer destination for visitors from Toronto, Guelph and Fergus;
- The riverside trail in this loop would make use of existing roads, lanes, walking dirt paths, and/or sidewalks and would be suitable for walkers, hikers and cyclists;
- This section would be especially important as the main off road connection to the existing Elora Cataract Trail;
- Partnership with Killam Properties, current owner of Stanley Park, would be required for finalized trail development in this area.

Figure 31: Recommended Trail Route
West Credit River Circuit





3.2.2 West Credit River Circuit

1.5 kms; 8 segments; 1 dam/ bridge combination, and 1 bridge

General:

- A complete riverside experience with a heightened connection to nature;
- Provides a continuous multi-use loop around the river;
- Natural extension of the Downtown Loop;

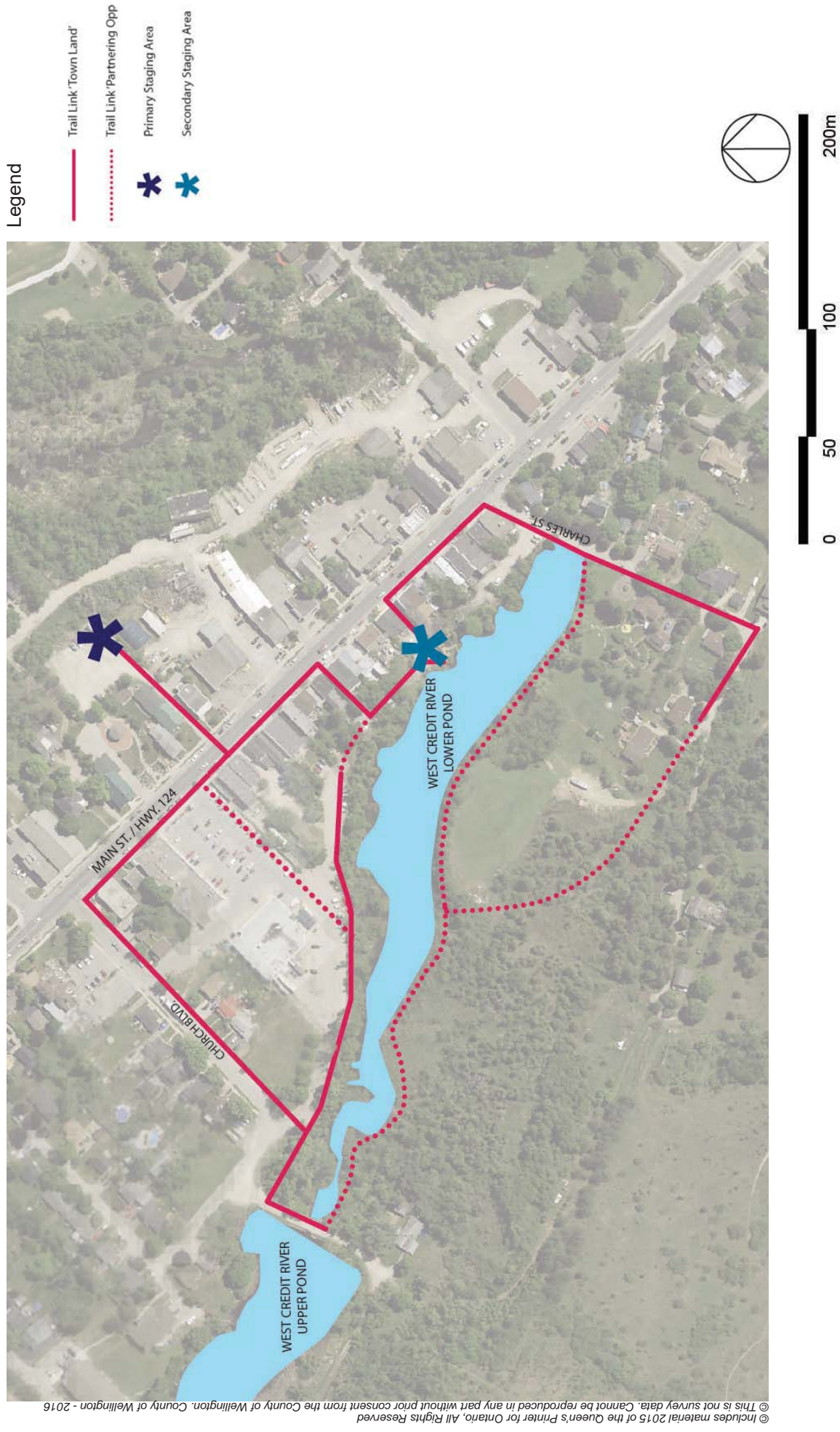
North Side:

- Main challenges for a continuous loop include partnership with the Agricultural Society, and private multi-unit residences (Shamrock Court and Centre Street Court Apartments) for riverside access;
- Alternative by-pass to follow Centre Street, to Main Street, to Church Boulevard;
- Opportunity for a secondary staging area at the base of Centre Street.

South Side:

- Similar riverside character as north side;
- Main challenges include partnership with Wellington County for the landfill site, and other private lands adjacent to the river;
- Review proposed trail alignment with CVC to locate best 'low impact' option re. adjacent wetlands;
- To ensure complete success of the Credit River Loop, accommodation for the trail (in terms of pavement markings, trail width) should be integrated with future renovation plans for Dundas Street Bridge, and Churchill Street Dam.

Figure 32: Recommended Trail Route
Downtown Erin Circuit





3.2.3

Downtown Erin Circuit

1.6 kms; 12 segments; 2 dam/bridge combinations

General:

- This circuit offers a bit of everything – the Historical Downtown environment and the romantic riverwalk all in a short, quick loop;
- Good for shorter, quick visits, or for people with limited mobility;
- Links with Historical Walking Trail, the Water Tower Trail etc.;
- Opportunity for cultural, natural and environmental interpretation;
- Suitable as a multi-use trail with an emphasis on the pedestrian;
- Riverside maintenance/clean up will be required to promote choice views of the Credit River (from vantage points and lookouts);
- Good 'triangulation' – important to safe and secure environments.

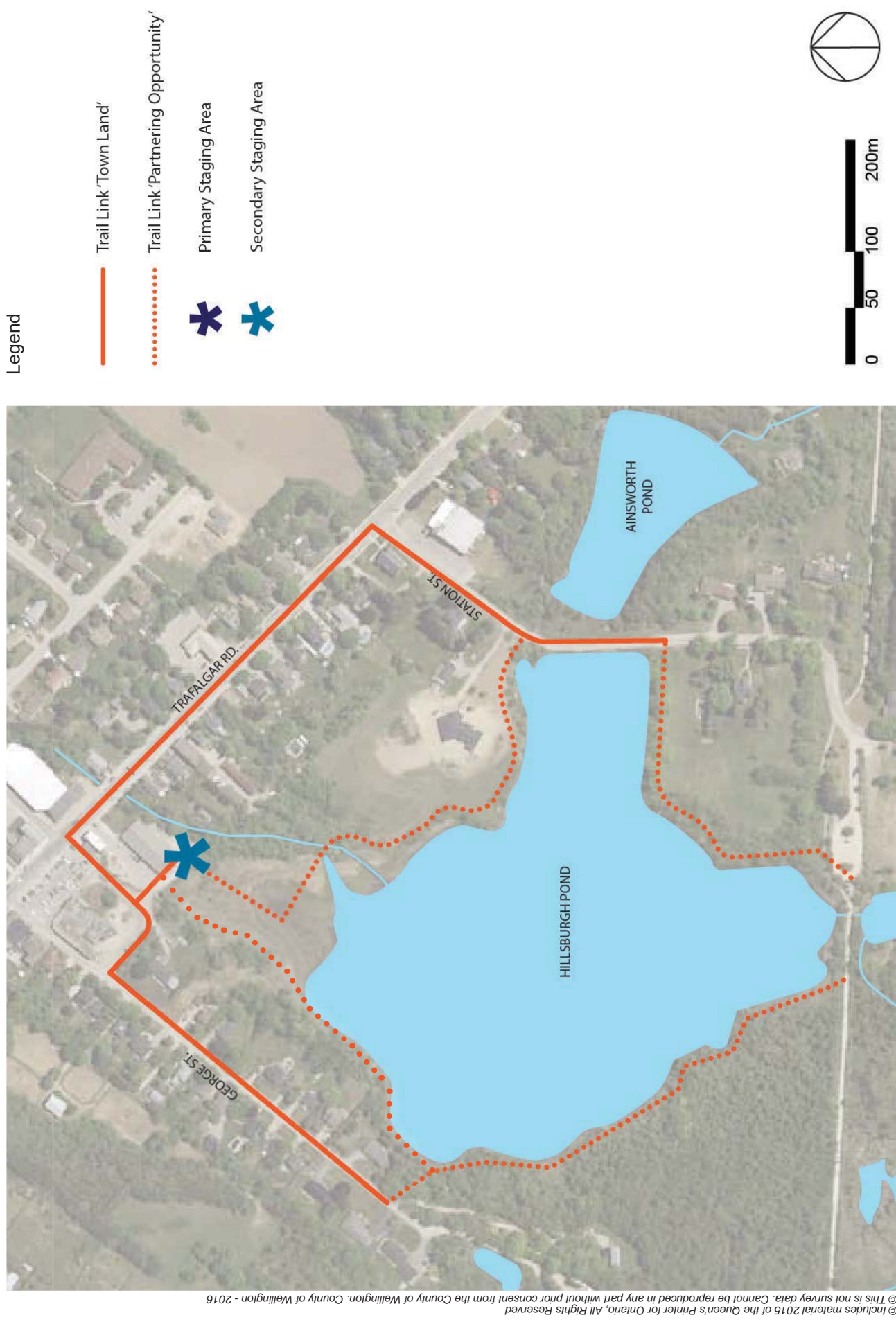
North Side:

- This part of the Downtown loop emphasizes the Urban experience;
- The trail makes use of the Town's existing sidewalks and roads;
- Builds on the initial efforts of the Rotary service group at Riverside Park;
- Promotes a positive experience through quick, direct connections to the West Credit River via choice vantage points and lookouts;
- Integrate the Riverwalk Trail Head (parking, washrooms, information kiosk and maps, bicycle racks, benches, etc) with the Town's plans to highlight the downtown parking lot and possible pedestrian crosswalk across Main Street;
- Integrate trail with streetscape in terms of sidewalk paving, and wayfinding;
- Secondary challenges include public access to riverfront in segments 23 and 24.

South Side

- This part of the Downtown Loop emphasizes more of a 'nature' experience;
- Access on the south side is required to maintain a preferred continuous walking experience;
- Challenges include a) riverside access along segments 28 and 30 (preferred for adjacency to river and trail experience); alternative is section 29, with similar challenges, for less gain; and b) views towards the 'back of building' spaces of the downtown requiring addressing re. appearance – possible CIP initiative.

Figure 33: Recommended Trail Route
Hillsburgh Circuit





3.2.4 Hillsburgh Mill Pond Circuit

3.4 kms; 10 segments; 1 dam/bridge combination;

General:

- Offers both natural (pond side) and urban (sidewalk) trail routes;
- Connects the Elora-Cataract Trail with downtown;
- This loop takes advantage of existing roads and sidewalks, while maximizing the user's ability to experience the area's natural features along a new wetland boardwalk trail.

West side:

- A meandering boardwalk in a wetland area aims to immerse users amidst the local flora and fauna and provide interpretive opportunities for its users;
- The trail connects with an existing road before meeting a staging area with a boardwalk allowing unique views from the north side of the pond;
- An optional boardwalk extension between pond and residential properties would complete the pond side experience;
- Challenges include: a) addressing grade changes where the boardwalk meets the Elora-Cataract Trail; b) meeting the specific criteria required for development in areas that include wetlands, floodplains and valley slopes; c) attaining appropriate permits for development; d) residential uses being casually extended onto County owned lands bordering the Mill Pond;

North Side:

- This part of the Hillsburgh Mill Pond circuit provides users with a more urban approach to the downtown core, with an optional pond side trail;
- Also originating from an access point along the Elora-Cataract Trail the western portion of this circuit makes use of existing roads (Station St.) to eventually connect with Trafalgar Road;
- The alignment of this trail requires passage over the Station Street Dam which is currently a topic of discussion in terms of reconstruction. With proper design and accommodation, this may provide an opportunity for a unique staging area full of interpretive value;
- The optional north shore boardwalk trail completes the pond side experience;
- Challenges: a) addressing existing (or lack of) infrastructure along Station Street; b) Uncertainty surrounding Station Street reconstruction which includes potential dam removal or reconstruction, and subsequent modifications to water levels, which in turn may offer new pond side trail alignment opportunities.

A scenic view of a river or lake with trees and reeds. The water is calm, reflecting the sky and the surrounding greenery. In the foreground, there are tall, dry reeds and some green plants. The background is filled with a dense line of trees, some with yellow leaves, suggesting a spring or autumn setting. The sky is blue with some white clouds.

4.0

Making the Case

This chapter identifies the implementation considerations to make the Rotary Riverwalk Trail a reality and outlines management needs, priorities and phasing, implementation strategies and recommendations.



4.1

Understanding What is Needed

The Erin Rotary Riverwalk Feasibility Study anticipates and defines feasibility of trail development adjacent to prominent watercourses in the Erin and Hillsburgh communities. If embraced, this can only be successful if funding, Town staff resources, and openness to community participation are embraced and are committed by Council on a frequent and sequenced basis. Annual investment would be preferred and an annual implementation budget for trail(s) development should be identified in an annual report prepared by appropriate Town staff and be based on objectives and opportunities for the coming year. This report could also comment on projects and trail related initiatives completed from the following year.

Any trails' program is an integrated body of components, and requires a strategic approach for implementation and a funding commitment. Focusing efforts on individual elements of a trails' program in isolation of others will not result in the level of success that it has been designed to achieve. For example, funding a stonedust trail in the short-term but not the development and delivery of programming or promotional campaigns, is not an efficient or recommended strategy.

The public and stakeholder input received during the preparation of the Feasibility Study indicate that residents in Erin support creating and improving trail facilities and programs to promote trail usage in the Town.

4.1.1

Why Should the Town Make the Investment?

There are numerous benefits that emphasize why the Town of Erin's commitment to implement an Erin Riverwalk trails program is so important. While much of this study has been driven by "economic development," few individuals need this report to detail the various benefits of walking and cycling in terms of recreation, health and fitness benefits; transportation benefits; and environmental benefits. However, the Town's investment in an Erin Riverwalk trails program can be expected to yield benefits in all of these areas.

In addition to these important benefits, the costs of the Feasibility Study can be justified as part of the cost of providing a more sustainable, balanced and efficient recreation and transportation system in the Town of Erin. Finally, as part of this study confirmed, Town residents want governments to invest in making Erin a more walkable and cyclable destination with "good" linkages between established trailways, like the Elora-Cataract Trail, and the downtown areas of both Erin and Hillsburgh. The Town should make the investment in trail implementation because residents are requesting it and it will support Council's and the Town's Economic Development Officer's efforts to make Erin one of the most desirable communities in Ontario to live, work and visit.

4.1.2

What is the Investment?

The Erin Rotary Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study primarily addresses infrastructure and operations planning for potential trails in and about two significant water-bodies/courses; one located in Erin and a second in Hillsburgh. Moving forward, it will require infrastructure, program development and operations (maintenance) funding to ensure successful implementation and monitoring. These types of improvements will need to be included in the Town's capital budget and forecasts.

4.1.2.1 Capital

It is estimated that the total capital investment to implement the network for both Erin and Hillsburgh is slightly more than \$1.6M over the 25 year horizon of the study, exclusive of maintenance – the unit prices assumed are summarized in the Appendix. This conservative estimate is based on stand-alone unit prices and 2015 values.



The estimated costs to implement the feasible trail proposals may vary for the following reasons:

- Costs vary widely depending on the style and ultimate design of the trails;
- The design of, timing for and construction of many of the proposed trail segments would be subject to infrastructure improvements being made by Town departments (Public Works) and other agencies such as Wellington County, Credit Valley Conservation Authority, etc. In these cases the final design of a segment may be part of a larger infrastructure improvement project that would be subject to a “larger” process and subsequent detail design; and beneficially,
- There may be an opportunities to partner with agencies for these projects. For example it is reasonable to assume that the Town would be able to partner and cost-share with the County for trail integration at bridge improvement projects, thus a cost to the Town for these types of projects are estimated and may change until each location has been studied in more detail as part of a pre-design of those structures.

4.1.2.2 Operations

Operations costs include on-going funding related to implementing a trails program, preparing the annual progress report, delivering safety, educational outreach and promotional programs, and performing network and infrastructure maintenance to achieve a state of good repair and to ensure all season use. This also includes staff resources as well as management and administration.

The incremental cost to maintain trails is relatively low. Generally speaking, most municipalities adjust maintenance budgets based on the number of kilometres of each facility and increase maintenance budgets relative to the length of new infrastructure added on an annual basis. Research suggests maintenance of mature off-road multi-use trails, particularly in greenways and parks is estimated to cost from \$4,000 to \$6,000 per linear kilometre of trail (3.5 m wide), depending on the level of service standard of a municipality. Rurally situated communities tend to have a lesser standard and much less dedicated budget for maintenance; relying on local service and/or trail



enthusiast groups for this service. Annual maintenance can include drainage and storm channel maintenance, sweeping, clearing of debris, trash removal, weed control and vegetation management, mowing of grass along shoulders, minor surface repairs, repairs to trail fixtures (benches, signs) and other general repairs. Costs also can vary depending on whether the trail is in a road boulevard or in a linear greenway or park and whether it is paved or has a granular surface. Interestingly, new asphalt off-road trails also typically have lower maintenance costs in the first 10 years.

An absolute dollar value for maintenance costs has not been calculated for the trails network as the budget for maintenance will need to grow in an incremental fashion along with the incremental growth of the trails network. As each new network segment is added the impact to the operations budget should be calculated by Town staff so that it can be added into the annual maintenance budget request.

4.1.3

Where Will the Money Come From?

The annual implementation budget for the trails program should be identified in an annual report and be based on implementation objectives and opportunities for the coming year. This report would also comment on projects from the previous year. It is expected that the majority of a trails program's capital costs related to proposed in-boulevard right-of-way facilities will be identified and included as component costs within a planned right of way widening, reconstruction, resurfacing, new development, or other Town and County projects.

To assist in reducing taxpayer costs, the Town of Erin should pursue outside funding opportunities. Over the last few years funding sources made available for cycling, pedestrian and trail related projects, and generally "active health" is at or near an all-time high, likely due to the popularity of trails today. It is expected that this trend will continue and the Town should dedicate Staff resourcing to explore and solicit funding support.



Outside funding opportunities may include and are not limited to:

- Wellington County/Municipal partnership opportunities;
- Federal / Provincial Gas Tax;
- Federation of Canadian Municipalities Green Municipal Fund;
- Federal / Provincial infrastructure stimulus funding;
- Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion grant programs;
- Ontario Ministry of Environment Community Go Green Fund (CGGF);
- Ontario Ministry of Transportation Demand Management Municipal Grant program;
- Partnership funding with Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health for infrastructure and health promotion related initiatives;
- The Communities in Action Fund available through the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion for programming and promotional initiatives related to health/active living/active transportation;
- The Canada-Ontario Infrastructure Program;
- Ontario Trillium Foundation (provincial increase through casino profits);
- Human Resources Development Canada program that enables personnel positions to be made available to various groups and organizations. OTC (Ontario Trails Council) has hired two people under this program;
- Corporate Environmental Funds such as Shell and Mountain Equipment Co-op that tend to fund small, labour-intensive projects where materials or logistical support is required;
- Corporate donations which may consist of money or services in-kind;
- Potential future funding that might emerge from the Province in rolling out the Ontario Trails Strategy;
- Service clubs (such as the Rotary) have assisted with a number of high visibility projects at the community level; and
- Private citizen donations/bequeaths, and this can also include a tax receipt for the donor where appropriate.

4.2 Trail Need Management

This section discusses what is needed in regards to trail management and speaks to aspects including insurance, liability, risk management, and general trail maintenance requirements.



4.2.1

Protecting Interests: Understanding Insurance, Liability, and Risk Management

Exposure to potential concerns from private landowners who grant access /easements or who are located adjacent to road right-of-way and multi-use trail facilities are liability concerns and certainly inform trail feasibility.

Interestingly, even though multi-use trails may be separated from the roadway, they still may legally fall under the definition of a “highway”, since bicycles are legally defined as vehicles. This is an important point because it means that “cycling facilities” are covered under many of the same basic immunities as other highways. It also illustrates the importance of adhering to appropriate design and construction guidelines, as this will provide the greatest legal protection. Aside from proper design and operation of multi-use trail facilities, the Town should consider and address potential hazards associated with these facilities including accidents, theft, vandalism, and other problems. This becomes much more acute when these facilities are located along waterways and residential backyard fences.

As part of the Feasibility Study, the following considerations for reducing risk are offered to identify some methods Erin can take to address/minimize liability associated with providing designated trail facilities:

- Improve the physical environment, increase public awareness of the rights and obligations of trail users and improve access to educational programs in order to demonstrate that efforts are being taken to reduce the likelihood of accidents occurring;
- Select, design and designate facilities in compliance with the highest prevailing standards;
- Detailed design concept(s) and construction documents should comply with all applicable laws and regulations;
- Retain qualified design professionals to prepare the appropriate detailed design/construction documentations and aid in construction contract administration;
- Maintenance operations should conform to acceptable standards. If a hazard cannot be removed, it must be isolated with barriers or notified by clear warning signage;
- Monitor on a regular basis the physical conditions and operations of trail facilities. All reports of hazardous conditions received from pedestrians, cyclists, police or others should be promptly and thoroughly investigated;
- Keep written records of monitoring and maintenance activities;
- Avoid describing or promoting routes or pathways as “safe” or “safer” than alternatives. It is preferable for facility users to assess their capabilities themselves and govern their choices accordingly, which is the prevailing situation; and
- Maintain proper municipal insurance coverage.



4.2.2

Trail Maintenance is Necessary

This section generally describes what a trail maintenance program for Erin's Riverwalk trails could be like. The general objectives of a trail monitoring and maintenance plan should include:

- Providing safe, dependable and affordable levels of service;
- Preserving the Town's infrastructure assets;
- Protecting the natural environment;
- Enhancing the appearance and health of the community;
- Providing a reference framework against which to measure performance;
- Providing the basis for a comparison (peer review) with other municipalities; and
- Providing Erin's citizens, guests and Council with a reference for expectations.

The first step in implementing a maintenance and management program for Erin would be to determine its scope. Ideally, these include the trail plans, maps, inventories, trail logs, traffic count information and condition surveys; all valuable sources of information for developing maintenance management systems.

4.3

Suggesting Priorities & Phasing



This section identifies a feasible, comprehensive trails network for both Erin and Hillsburgh and consists of multi-use trails potentially situated along road rights-of-way and trails on lands outside of road rights-of-way.



This section of the feasibility study infers an implementation phasing consideration for the short to medium to long range horizons and includes all new components of the trails network based on a logical “build-out” of the network over time, field observations and the application of the following criteria:

- Developing or enhancing the trail network in locations where a greater number of users are anticipated;
- Establishing main corridors between/to important community destinations such as the downtowns, community centres and recreation areas, residential areas, and key points of interest throughout Erin and Hillsburgh;
- Making or completing key connections that form part of the Town and local/ regional trail routes;
- Making connections between/to existing facilities in locations where the completion of a small missing link results in the creation of a significantly longer continuous trail;
- Developing trail loops throughout the community;
- Linking trail segments to affect Active Transportation/commuting access; and,
- Pursuing implementation with planned Provincial, Agency, County and local capital projects where possible to take advantage of possible cost savings.

4.3.1 Trail Facilities

Figures 29 and 33 illustrate the implementation of trail facilities by phase: short-term (Phase 1: 0 to 15 years), mid-term (Phase 2: 16 to 25 years) and longer term (Phase 3: 26 to 50+ years). Each of the facility types and phases is distinguished according to colour and line type. The ultimate network (following build-out) would be represented by the combination of all of the colours and lines.

A number of route segments and related facility types proposed for implementation in Phases 2 and 3 may not prove to be feasible because of other circumstances (e.g. funding constraints, outcome of an Environmental Assessment or detailed design, negotiations for easements and purchase of land). In these situations, an interim solution may be possible and should be investigated by Town staff.

4.4

Getting Beyond Feasibility: How to Implement a Trails Program



A successful trails program requires champions and leadership to move from feasibility to plan and design stage to the funding and implementation stage. The formal relationships between individuals and organizations and their operational practices are important factors in determining whether trails initiatives will proceed and be successful. Maximizing participation and removing obstacles to the flow of information between participants are two of the main objectives in managing implementation.

Erin's Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study is more than a proposed network of trail facilities. It is a study that includes a set of recommendations to promote safe, accessible trail use in Erin and to recognize, realize and share in the economic, health and quality of life benefits that a riverwalk trail can offer.

It is recommended that Town staff from Economic Development and Parks and Recreation, should oversee the implementation of a Riverwalk Trail. They will also require ongoing support from and communication with the Town's advisory committees, Credit Valley Conservation Authority, Wellington County, adjacent Trail Associations, and other organizations and advocacy groups. The successful implementation of a Riverwalk Trail will require a strong working relationship between Town and County staff as well as conservation authorities, future developers and the public.

4.4.1

A Trails Advisory Committee

The Trails Sub-Committee has had an important role in advancing trail initiatives including this feasibility study. This includes not only assisting with the planning of trail routes, but also with trail advocacy and promotion, construction of some trails and their amenities and with trail maintenance. This role should continue and be expanded to include future initiatives related to the Riverwalk Trail. Sub-committees can be designated for various areas of work such as accessibility, off-road trails, on-road cycling, promotion and communication, etc. This model would require updating and expanding the mandate for the Town's current Trails Sub-Committee to include additional members with an interest in accessibility, active transportation, public health and trails.

4.4.2

Who Does What?

An efficient reporting and implementation structure is vital to ensure that the decision-making process associated with the implementation of the Riverwalk Trail is managed and all relevant municipal departments are appropriately engaged.

Led by Economic Development, a core "Riverwalk Trail" team should be formed with representation from the Town's Public Works, Planning, and Parks and Recreation Services. The core group of this recommended reporting structure would oversee and make recommendations regarding funding and priorities associated with the Riverwalk Trail, as well as other trail initiatives, as required. This proposed structure is intended as a suggestion only and Town staff should select the right reporting model that is efficient and inclusive of affected departments.

4.4.3

Beyond Feasibility: A Next-Steps Process

Erin's Riverwalk Trail Feasibility Study is not necessarily intended to be a static document. The timing and details related to implementation, particularly the detailed alignments of recommended routes and facility types should and will evolve through additional design, community consultation and technical review during the implementation – more work will be required if the Town chooses to proceed with implementation. At the same time, however, the extensive effort that established feasibility and subsequently the overall direction for the Riverwalk Trails network should be respected when network implementation and modifications are being contemplated.

The following process is a "step-by-step" approach to further assess each route or segment recommended in this study at the time implementation is proposed. It will assist Town staff from affected departments to work together, to share information and to facilitate the implementation of the trails. Each part of the network implementation process is described in the following sections.

1. Assessing a Project (for each route or segment)

The first step in implementing segments of the trail network is to identify and communicate opportunities. As such, Town infrastructure projects including the capital works forecast should be monitored. When a project identified in the



Feasibility Study is advanced to the planning stage, or an opportunity to establish a new route perhaps not identified in the study comes forward, staff responsible for the implementation of the Riverwalk Trail network should undertake a preliminary review. This review should:

- Compare the timing of the project to the short, mid and long term implementation priorities identified in the Erin Riverwalk Trails Feasibility Study;
- Assess whether the nature of the project may permit implementation of the recommended facility type in a cost effective manner; and
- Inform the project lead and affected departments whether or not additional assessment should be undertaken to confirm current challenges and costs for implementing the proposed route as part of the subject project.

The key aspect of this initial step is communication. Staff from various departments should report all upcoming projects that may involve or impact a trail route identified in the Feasibility Study.

2. Conceptual Design and Evaluation

If a trail project (segment, network route, amenity development, etc) is confirmed through the preliminary assessment process, a conceptual functional design assessment should be undertaken, which includes the following:

- Confirm the feasibility of the route based on a review of the Feasibility Study and supporting route selection and planning and design criteria, and conduct a field check for off-road trails segments to identify any other issues that should be explored in the future;
- Determine if further public consultation should be conducted and to what level it is required (i.e. Environmental Assessment in the case of watercourse crossings versus notification of neighbouring residents in the case of property adjacency, local connection or upgrade);



- Undertake additional conceptual functional design beyond that of the initial feasibility study for the segment and estimate implementation costs, including construction and marking/signing;
- Identify any less costly alternatives and how they may fit within the intent of the overall network plan, and this may include alternative parallel routes that meet the intent of the trail; and
- Provide a recommended course of action.

3. Detailed Design, Tender and Implementation

Once determination has been made to proceed the necessary detailed design should be completed by an appropriate design professional. The final step involves tendering the project (if not undertaken in-house) and then construction / implementation. It is also possible that following detailed design the decision is made not to proceed with the facility or preferred facility type because of the cost, other constraints that arise through the detailed design process or based on direction from Council. If this occurs, the network should be updated and an alternative route should be proposed.

4. Monitoring Phase

Once facilities have been constructed, their design and use should be monitored to ensure they function in the manner intended. When necessary, the facilities should also be upgraded and maintained to ensure safe and continued use. A set of performance measures to assist in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the plan should be developed by the Trails Sub-Committee and Town staff.



4.4.4 Being a Good Neighbour

It is often challenging to implement trails in established neighbourhoods, even if the intent to do so has been clearly documented in strategic plans like the Erin Riverwalk Trails Feasibility Study. It is sometimes difficult to obtain public opinion related to specific trail segments at the feasibility stage and it is not until a project reaches the implementation stage that residents who perceive themselves as being directly affected choose to become more involved and vocal. Real and perceived concerns over increased neighbourhood traffic, access to their private spaces, invasion of privacy, a perception that there may be an increased potential for vandalism and theft are often cited as key concerns.

One aspect of a program to overcome this challenge is to engage residents in an open, public consultation process in the earliest possible stages of the project – much like what was offered during the feasibility study. In some cases, the most vocal opponent can become the greatest supporter if the process provides an effective avenue to address concerns.

4.4.5 Finding Land for Trails

Although much of the recommended trails networks are proposed to lay on lands that are currently in public ownership there are some areas of the town where a trail connection is desired, yet there is no public land available at the present time. Some of these connections are located along natural heritage corridors (i.e. creeks and valleys) in land that is managed by the Credit Valley Conservation Authority.

There are a number of other locations throughout the Town where the land has already been urbanized, yet a future trail connection is desired and limited to no public land exists. To realize the full build out of the network and complete the connections across these lands may require permission for access or a strategy to secure ownership. A range of strategies are available to accomplish this, from “handshake” access agreements to purchase arrangements of these lands by a municipality.

Table 1 is a summary of some of the land securement techniques commonly available to most municipalities for making key connections in the trail network over lands that are not currently in public ownership. The Town should review these potential strategies and use them as a starting point for developing an access/acquisition policy for key trail links.

Techniques	Definition	Pros/Cons	Legislative Basis	Who/How Administration	Type of Lands
1 Purchase: Includes 'First Right of Refusal'; Local Area Levies and Local Improvement Charges	Purchase of Land at fair market value	Municipal or other group directly acquires land. Permanent protection and public access. Options exist to recover costs through levies or charges on benefitting owners.	Municipal Act (right of Municipality to acquire and dispose of own land) and right of Municipality to levy local improvement charge on benefitting land.	Municipal government Land Trusts. Non-Profit Groups (eg. nature Conservancy) Community Cooperative. Partnerships	Any greenspace particularly those requiring environmental protection.
2 Land Exchange: (equivalent to out-right purchase)	Lands or interests in land can be traded to achieve mutual interests and net differences in values can then be settled.	Same cost as purchase; permanent protection; public access possible. Must be equitable to both parties.	Municipal Act (right of municipality to acquire and dispose of own land.)	Municipal most common - public ownership.	Any land or land use greenspace or other type of use including housing.
3 Donation / Bequest: Including a life estate.	Land, or interests in land donated during an individual's lifetime or by private corporation or as a bequest as part of an estate. The donor may opt to retain use of land until death.	Low cost / permanent protection and public access. Tax benefits to donor. Land must meet Federal Tax rules for donation in order to qualify for tax exemptions.	Municipal Act. Income Tax Act.	All of the above. Both public and private ownership.	Any greenspace or other types of lands including housing.
4 Parkland Dedication	Lands dedicated to municipality for parkland purposes as a result of subdivision development. Usually relates to recreation land but may be used to acquire natural areas.	Provides parkland in growing communities; can be converted to cash for more flexibility. Planning act limits amount of land that can be required at no charge.	Planning Act	Municipal Ownership	Any greenspace, but usually active parkland.
5 Traditional Land Use and Other Regulatory Controls	Use of Land Use Planning (Official Plan / Zoning Subdivision Watershed and Sub-Watershed Plans) and other regulatory controls. Land Ownership does not change.	Intent for this land is provided in the Official Plan. Permanent protection can be achieved. May not be popular and does not provide for public access. May trigger requests for financial compensation or purchase.	Planning Act. Conservation Authorities Act. Fisheries Act. Aggregate Recourses Act	Municipal, Province, Conservation Authorities. Usually private ownership or public ownership other than the city.	Any greenspace if designation or zoning is not successfully challenged.

Table 1: Land Securement Tools Chart

Techniques	Definition	Pros/Cons	Legislative Basis	Who/How Administration	Type of Lands
6 Sale with Restrictions (including land acquisition and resale)	land can be sold with restrictions in place to control future uses.	Generates revenue while maintaining greenspace; permanent protection; public access can be negotiated. Restricted land more difficult to sell, limited market and reduced value.	Municipal Act. Conservation Land Act.	Municipal / Provincial Government	Greenspaces requiring environmental protection where public access may not be as critical.
7 Land Trust	Non-profit organizations dedicated to conserving open space, natural areas etc.	High profile grass roots organization. Provides permanent protection and public education. Limits public access. Needs high profile and independence to get funds.		Generally non-profit incorporated community organization or a chapter within an existing organization.	Usually land needing environmental protection or recreational trails.
8 Corporate Landowner Agreement / Condominium Agreement	Similar to Land Trust Conservation land can be owned by a shareholder's corporation or condominium devoted to the protection and management of the lands.	An alternative to government ownership and management; no cost; flexible management costs borne by those directly benefitting. Protection not guaranteed. Little used; no guarantee of public access, needs a willing corporate entity.	Corporations Act Condominium Act	Private Landowners, would not involve public ownership.	Any greenspaces.
9 Conservation Easement	An agreement the restricts uses for conservation purposes and when registered on title they bind both current and future landowners.	Low Cost; may be more acceptable to landowner; can provide permanent protection. Costs of easements may be as great as purchase; public access may be limited; requires ongoing monitoring; not extensively used in Ontario.	Ontario Heritage Act; Ministry of Government Services Act; Land Conservation Act	Only government agencies and registered charities including land trusts. Private ownership	Usually land needing environmental protection as well as heritage buildings.

Table 1: Land Securement Tools Chart Cont'd

Techniques	Definition	Pros/Cons	Legislative Basis	Who/How Administration	Type of Lands
10 Restrictive Covenant	A condition on title that restricts the landowner's use of the land or assigns certain rights or access to an adjacent landowner. Applicable where a government wishes to control land use but not own the land.	Low cost; can provide permanent protection. Can only be used under certain conditions; unlikely to be able to specify long term management obligation. Public access not likely.	Common Law	Any government conservation authority. Private ownership	Usually land needing environmental protection.
11 Lease / License	A lease gives exclusive rights to use the land for a specified term and cost. Licenses give permission to use property for a purpose but not exclusive rights and does not bind future owner.	Public access can be negotiated. Agreement must be renewed periodically; may not protect land in perpetuity.		Legal lease or license agreement between parties. Private or public ownership.	Any land.
12 Incentives / Assistance ie. Tax rebates, Credits, Management Agreements, or Funding Assistance	Tax or management incentives to encourage retention/ restoration of natural areas. Usually linked to land use restrictions such as Provincial policy and zoning.	Lower cost and non-confrontational; willing landowner agreement. Difficult to monitor compliance; does not provide public access or permanent protection. Lost tax revenue.	Woodlands Improvement Act; Games and Fisheries Act; Conservation Authorities Act; Conservation Land Act.	Ministry of Natural Resources; Conservation Authorities; Private Ownership	Usually land needing environmental protection.
13 Stewardship Support/ Education	Private land owner care and protection of land. Can be linked to incentives.	Voluntary. Least costly; non-threatening; builds rapport. Not permanent. No public access or protection.	N/A.	Private although all levels of government publicize and provide support.	Usually land needing environmental protection.

Table 1: Land Securement Tools Chart Cont'd



4.4.6

Public Outreach and Trail Promotion

While feasibility suggests the possibilities for trails, there are many opportunities to raise awareness about the privilege of using trails such as interpretive programs and signs, brochures, either self-guided or as part of a wider natural and cultural heritage education program – many are currently being developed for some of Erin's current trail ways. These, in many ways, support local economic development in ways that the trails themselves cannot. More importantly, the need to educate users about their obligations as responsible trail users is an integral part of managing the network. Public Service campaigns, information signs and interpretive signs are also useful ways to send messages to trail users and neighbours that the municipality is aware of particular concerns, that situations are being monitored and actions are being taken.

4.4.7

Marketing Trails and Trail Mapping in Erin

"Takeaways" such as trail maps are one of the most overlooked opportunities to spread the word about trails. Maps inform users where the routes are, plus they provide an opportunity to educate trail users through messages such as "rules of the trail" and trail user etiquette. To assist in the cost of producing trail maps, many municipalities have been very successful at selling advertising space on their map. Once beyond feasibility, and as part of the development of marketing, a trail branding strategy should be undertaken. A key component of a trails' branding strategy is the preparation of a trail logo that would be used on maps, brochures, trail signage, and advertisement related to Erin's trails.



4.4.8

People who make it work: Trail Ambassadors

The Town has many individuals excited by the prospects of a Rotary Riverwalk trail network in both Erin and Hillsburgh; members of the Town's Trails Sub-Committee are serving informally as "trail champions." Many municipalities have successfully implemented trail ambassador programs which often involve teaming a staff leader with summer students who attend events and functions organized by downtowns, private businesses and agencies, camps and related recreation programs, where they promote the use of the trails and in some cases teach certain skills such as hiking, orienteering, cycling, nature appreciation, etc. In addition, ambassadors hike/ride the routes and trails, hand out trail brochures, provide assistance to users, and monitor the condition of facilities.

Trail ambassadors or patrols travel the entire trail system on a regular basis and can be trained to take note of, and report observations related to trail surface conditions, vandalism, user-conflicts, environmental degradation and overgrown vegetation to the appropriate Town staff.

As a trail system evolves in Erin, grows and matures, the Town should explore the merits of a trail ambassador/patrol program. In the interim, training park maintenance staff (including seasonal staff) to carefully observe and take note of trail conditions as part of their day-to-day maintenance role is an effective way to assist Operations in keeping track of trail conditions.



4.4.9

Sharing the Wealth, Celebrating Successes

Opportunities exist for the Town to develop partnerships with businesses and other agencies that provide services to a large sector of the population. In many municipalities there is a strong interest in partnering with other agencies in promoting trail development and trail use as a healthy lifestyle choice and economic development opportunity. Partnerships with agencies can include jointly produced promotional or educational literature in magazines, materials distributed through offices, materials on or linked to corporate/agency websites. Services through local governments and agencies such as Wellington County, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority and PublicHealth (Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph), deliver important messages on community spaces for healthy lifestyles, healthy living choices and active living and are likely opportunities for the Town to develop strong and mutually beneficial partnerships.

Partnerships with agencies can also include co-participation in annual events related to trail use and provide prime economic development opportunities for Erin. Obvious events such as the Terry Fox Run, and other fundraisers, and events such as Ride to Work Week and Earth Day are natural matches for a trails system. Allowing time for key staff to contribute to the organization of these events that use the trails is a simple, cost-effective way to spread the word about using the trail system. Many events attract thousands of walkers, runners, cyclists to one-day fundraisers that use trails extensively, providing visibility through extensive media coverage at essentially no cost to the owners of the trail.

It is mutually beneficial to recognize the efforts of private business when they partner with the Town on initiatives related to the development and use of the trail system. Recognition through the media for efforts that encourage more trail development and use is a very positive way of showing partners that their contribution is appreciated. Furthermore, media recognition is a simple and cost-effective way to raise awareness and encourage use. Where contributions are made that improve conditions of the trail, such as the provision of trail amenities, creation of links across private properties, etc., the Town should recognize the effort which has been displayed for these contributions. This can be done with donor signs and plaques that are tastefully designed and carefully located. Many trails across the country have been built this way.

4.5 Recommendations

Any trails' program is an integrated body of landscapes and components, and requires a strategic approach for management, implementation as well as an associated funding commitment and celebrating successes. Management and championing of the intuitive(s) is paramount.





4.5.1 Management Recommendations

As management recommendations, the Town of Erin should:

1. Resource Town staff from Economic Development, Public Works and Parks and Recreation to oversee the implementation of a Riverwalk Trail. They will also require ongoing support from and communication with the Town's advisory committees, Credit Valley Conservation Authority, Wellington County, adjacent Trail Associations, and other organizations and advocacy groups;
2. Develop a reporting model that is efficient and inclusive of affected departments committees, support agencies, etc. Creating an efficient reporting and implementation structure will help ensure that the decision-making process associated with the implementation of the Riverwalk Trail is managed and all relevant Town departments are appropriately engaged;
3. Require updating and expanding the mandate for the Town's current Trails Sub-Committee to include additional members with an interest in accessibility, economic development, active transportation, public health and trails in general. This sub-committee's role should continue and be expanded to include future initiatives related to the Riverwalk Trail.

4.5.2 Implementation and Funding Recommendations

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As implementation and funding recommendations, the Town of Erin should:

4. Pursue an implementation “phasing consideration” appealing to the short (~3yrs), medium (5 – 10yrs) and long range (>15yrs) horizons; the following criteria should be considered in aligning anticipated circuit/loops and segment development with horizons:
 - should have an apparent or real possibility in securing land for trail development;
 - should, being most preferred, promote tangible/obvious trail development through expansion of the existing system with “new” trail segments (rather than just enhancing existing roads, sidewalks and/or paths);
 - should increase connectivity along the river and to other networks promoting a strong gesture for “river experience” to Erin’s residents and guests;
 - should only result in none-to-manageable impact of private property;
 - should have straightforward implementation with fewer external concerns; and
 - can become good “campaign projects” (for future initiatives).
5. Select a “pilot project” (or trail segment) to demonstrate trail enthusiasm, support, build-quality;
6. Align with “other” initiatives that could serve the trails’ implementation; for example, the final design of a trail segment may be part of a larger infrastructure improvement project. Being part of a “larger” process may provide for subsequent detail design and funding;
7. Partner with Town departments and other agencies for its trail projects as the design of, timing for, and construction of many of the proposed trail segments will likely be subject to infrastructure improvements being made by Town departments (Public Works, Parks and Recreation, etc.) as well as other agencies such as Wellington County, Credit Valley Conservation Authority, etc.;
8. Embrace “annual” versus “by the project” investment for the trails programs. Annual investment would be preferred and an annual implementation budget for implementing trail(s) development should be identified in an annual report prepared by appropriate Town staff and based on implementation objectives and opportunities for the coming year. This report could also comment on projects and trail related initiatives completed from the previous year(s);
9. Dedicate staff resourcing to explore and pursue outside funding opportunities and should solicit funding support which can assist in reducing taxpayer costs;
10. Pursue opportunities to develop “sponsor” partnerships with businesses and other agencies for trail development; and,
11. Embark on a “Town of Erin Trails Master Plan” to integrate the Erin Riverwalk Trail project with potential new trails and other existing trails, Active Transportation, etc.



4.5.3 Messaging Recommendations

There are many opportunities to raise awareness about the privilege of using trails such as websites, interpretive programs and signs, brochures, either self-guided or as part of a wider natural and cultural heritage education program – these “messages” serve trail initiatives in many ways:

As messaging recommendations, the Town of Erin should:

12. Pursue a trail branding strategy as the trail system evolves in Erin, grows and matures. A key component of a trails’ branding strategy is the preparation of a comprehensive trail logo that would be used on maps, brochures, trail signage, and advertisement related to Erin’s trails. The intent is not to replace current trail branding but to embrace/integrate past efforts into the broader initiative;
13. Similarly, explore the merits of a trail ambassador / patrol program for all trails;
14. Pursue opportunities to develop “messaging partnerships” with businesses and other agencies, that provide services to the population;
15. Partner with services offered through local governments and agencies, such as Wellington County, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority and PublicHealth (Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph), etc., to deliver important messages on community spaces for healthy lifestyles, healthy living choices and active living; and,
16. Promptly recognize the effort which has been displayed for contributions made that improve conditions of the trail, such as the provision of trail amenities, creation of links across private properties, etc.; this can be done with donor signs and plaques that are tastefully designed and carefully sited.

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