

Calling all Waterfront lovers.

By: Alyssa Beurling

Since its creation in 1992, the Waterfront Trail strives to connect urban and rural areas, and reconnect people to their communities and the Great Lakes Waterfront. The Waterfront Trail serves as the linkage between over 405 parks and natural areas, including wetlands, forests and beaches, and stretches across 1,600 kilometres of shoreline from the eastern border of Ontario to the northwest. Over the years, the trail has become a local favourite for leisure and recreation and is a place where people can go to reconnect with nature.

Locally, Toronto and Durham Region have made, and continue to make, a number of improvements for enhanced accessibility along their portions of the Waterfront Trail. A lot of work has gone into creating trail segments, and now many neighbouring communities are working collaboratively to link their sections for increased functionality.

Along the shoreline in the City of Pickering and the Town of Ajax, the Waterfront Trail provides residents with the opportunity to view many natural and cultural aspects of their communities. Pickering's Millennium Square has recently received an upgrade, which has received the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects Award of Excellence for its beautiful design. Homeplace, at Alex Robertson Park, has many enticing features, including unique wood carvings completed by the artist Dorsey James. The Town of Ajax was the first community along the Waterfront Trail to achieve a completely off-road asphalt trail from end to end. The scenic views and rehabilitated ecosystems along the Durham waterfront encouraging more people to experience Lake Ontario and our beautiful trails. The sense of pride and community, undeniable among those who frequent the trail, is helping to deepen appreciation and encourage protection of the significant ecosystems and landscapes it passes through.

Over the years, the 'Waterfront Trail vision' has led to the collaboration of municipalities, Conservation Authorities, government, and non-government agencies and many volunteers across the entire Great Lakes waterfront in Ontario. More people than ever are coming together to fund and contribute to a healthier and more vibrant waterfront. The Waterfront Trail is a direct result of hundreds of small waterfront regeneration projects, with 140 projects currently planned, proposed or underway to continue the Waterfront Trail's improvement. Toronto and Region Conservation is currently working in Scarborough to create a linking system of trails. The project is set to span from Bluffer's Park to East Point in Toronto and will focus on increasing environmental sustainability, public access and tourism opportunities.

Explore the Waterfront Trail and the surrounding nature by walking, running or riding a bike. With all the work that is already completed, and future work planned, this fall is shaping up to be the perfect time to explore the Waterfront near you!

For more information, contact:

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References:

1. Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. (2015). [Scarborough Waterfront Project](#).
2. Waterfront Regeneration Trust: Waterfront Trail. (2013). [Leading the movement for waterfront regeneration on Canada's Great Lakes](#).