



# Discovery Routes

There's no end to our trails



**Discovery Routes**  
**2023-2027 Strategic Plan**

**Connecting Communities**

## Acknowledgment

This strategic plan exists thanks to the efforts of Discovery Routes Board members, volunteers, staff and Trails Partners.

Special thanks to Peridot Solutions for assistance with the 2021 Trails Community Consultation involving an online survey and interviews with 20 community-based trail groups and 30 municipalities and First Nations. The results helped to inform this strategic plan by providing a better understanding of the needs of our Trails Partners, how they are supported, current and forecasted organizational and trail infrastructure needs, and the impact COVID-19 on trail use and trail management practices.

Staff and Board member input was an integral part of the strategic plan development. Special thanks to the 2021-2022 Board of Directors for your patience during many virtual brainstorming and discussion sessions.

The final plan was presented during the 2022 Discovery Routes Annual Meeting.

Funding provided by the Government of Ontario and the Ontario Trillium Foundation





## Organization History

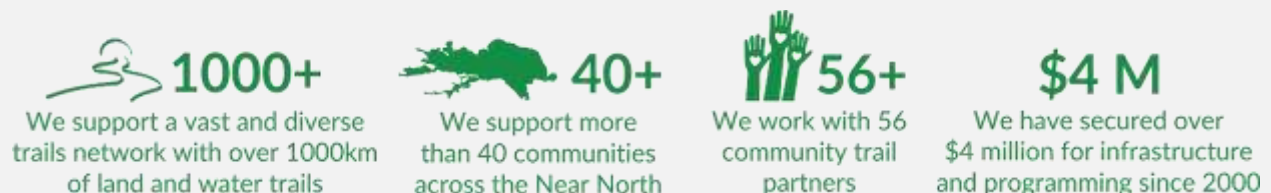
The original concept of Discovery Routes evolved in the late 1980's from a group of individuals and representatives of local and provincial agencies who were committed to implementing a recreational trail system in Ontario's Near North. The goal of enriching community life was presented by linking communities across the region through traditional trails and rights-of-ways. Established in 1992, Discovery Routes Trails Organization was a trails advocacy group, the first of its kind in Ontario taking a regional approach to the development and coordination of a multi-use trail system.

In 1994, a study was completed for Discovery Routes which highlighted the importance of trails not only for their recreational value, but as an activity that contributes to the economic vitality of the region. Facts that remain even more relevant today with increased awareness of the connection of nature and the outdoors to physical and mental health.

Discovery Routes was granted its not-for-profit incorporation in 1998 established for the purposes of promoting and coordinating a shared-use recreation trail network in cooperation with Trail Partners across the region. Charitable status followed in 2001.

In the early stages, Discovery Routes defined its role in trail development with local Trails Partners being responsible for the planning, development and maintenance of local trails, and Discovery Routes being responsible for the regional trail corridors linking local routes. A primary focus of Discovery Routes since 1994 has been the designation of local trails as part of the nation-wide Trans Canada Trail. In 2015, Discovery Routes assumed the role of coordinating agency for the implementation of the Véloroute Voyageur / Voyageur Cycling Route. Cycling route development benefits local communities as a vehicle for increased tourism, infrastructure investment, improved recreational opportunities and greater community connectivity. Discovery Routes has been actively pursuing funding opportunities for trail development of these corridors and has brought more than \$4 million into the region for various trail projects and programs.

Rooted in the principles that have guided the development of Discovery Routes from its beginnings, Discovery Routes continues to be a leader in trail development locally, regionally and across the Province. Today, Discovery Routes promotes a network of land and water-based trails and active transportation facilities in excess of 1000km connecting all communities in the region with connections to Eastern Ontario, the National Capital Region and Quebec.



## Vision

A thriving trails network connecting communities and meeting the diverse needs of trail users in the Near North.

## Mission

To invest in partnerships for the development and promotion of sustainable multi-use trails and active transportation systems throughout the Near North. Our collaboration and support through the sharing of resources, raising awareness, education and technology connects citizens and visitors while stimulating economic growth, encouraging an active, healthy lifestyle and appreciation for the natural beauty and history of the region.

## Values

Discovery Routes is guided by a set of core values that represent the organization's commitment to the regional trails network. The organization pursues its vision and mission by dedication to:

**Leadership:** As a leader in trail and active transportation development and promotion, we inspire amazing contributions from volunteers, professional staff, partners and trail users.

**Stewardship:** We encourage the adoption of responsible planning, conservation and sustainable practices in the development, maintenance and use of the regional trails and the active transportation network.

**Partnership:** We work collaboratively with volunteers, local action groups, communities and government agencies to share best practices in trail development and promotion, and make the most of available resources.

**Sustainability:** We support the regional trails network by fostering community involvement and growing revenues required to operate the organization and improve the trails network.

**Integrity:** We are transparent, honest and ethical in all interactions and recognize the essential responsibility to use contributions and resources to best support the needs of the trails community.

## Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

The vast network of trails we celebrate exist on the traditional lands and waterways of the Anishinaabe people within the territory protected by the Robinson Huron Treaty of 1850 and Williams Treaties of 1923. By recognizing and honouring the past stewards and original land keepers, we aim to work together collaboratively, where all can connect meaningfully with the rich history of the lands and waters we call home.



## Strategic Directions

### Priority 1: Sustainability & Governance

Strong governance is required to sustain the organizational capacity to deliver the programs and services that best support the organization's Trail Partners. Building a sustainable organization will be dependent on development of a diverse and sustainable revenue base to support core funding requirements, and maintain the human resources including staff and volunteers to effectively carry out Discovery Routes' mission.

**Priority Statement: Ensure the stability and long term continuity of Discovery Routes through strong governance, human resource capacity and a solid, diverse funding base**

**Objective 1: To establish a reliable and diverse revenue base to support core funding requirements and supports to Trails Partners**

- Develop a fundraising strategy that focusses on organizational funding requirements as well as funding supports for local Trails Partners
- Implement actions recommended in the Fundraising Strategy
- Solicit project-based grants that include an administration fee whenever possible
- Develop Fee-for-Service programs and services to be delivered by DRTTO staff and volunteers

**Objective 2: To maintain strong governance that uses strengths to achieve organizational sustainability**

- Approval of Strategic Plan at Annual Meeting
- Develop an Operational Reserve Fund Policy
- Review and Update DRTTO Policies and Procedures Manual
- Clarify role and areas of accountability for Directors and Officers
- Ensure wide geographic and broad sector representation on Board of Directors

**Objective 3: To ensure human resource capacity to sustain the organization and achieve its mission effectively and efficiently**

- Develop a succession plan for key Board and staff positions
- Provide staff and volunteer development opportunities to increase skills and expertise in the areas of human and financial resources, NFP management, and best practices in sustainable trail and active transportation development
- Increase volunteer engagement and recognition
- Provide volunteer opportunities for youth and promote through high schools (mandatory high school hours)





## Priority 2: Partnerships & Communication

Trails Partners are the foundation of Discovery Routes. Discovery Routes' Trails Partners are: the local volunteer trail groups, landowners and municipalities that build, manage and maintain local trails; agencies and organizations that promote healthy active living and environmental appreciation and conservation; active transportation advocates that promote safe and responsible use of trails; educators, knowledge keepers and storytellers that preserve the heritage of the trails; and, economic development and tourism agencies that promote trails as an attraction. With a focus on renewing Trails Partner communications and engaging new and diverse partnerships, Discovery Routes will grow the trails community and meet the diverse needs of trail users in the Near North.

**Priority Statement: Develop and establish committed partnerships and strong communication practices with Discovery Routes' Trails Partners.**

### **Objective 1: To develop and implement a collaborative and coordinated Communications Strategy**

- Develop a Communications Strategy to increase the profile of Discovery Routes
- Implement the Communications Strategy

### **Objective 2: To establish a strong committed partnership network with Discovery Routes acting as a leader in the trails community**

- Foster relationships with new and current Trail Partners with a diversity in geography, age, trail interest and community connections
- Maintain membership and engagement with provincial and national organizations and agencies with a trail related mandate
- Strengthen government relations toward collective outcomes and impacts
- Develop communication tools to assist trail managers to communicate with trail users
- Increase trail sector capacity and knowledge
- Improve cultural connections and heritage appreciation
- Improve engagement with local Indigenous communities that support shared stewardship



### Priority 3: Trail Systems

Discovery Routes will continue to work together with Trails Partners and foster community involvement to support the development of local trails and regional trail connections and improve the quality of the trail experience to meet the diverse needs of trail users. Through shared resources, raising awareness of best practices, and partnerships, Discovery Routes will encourage the adoption of responsible planning and sustainable practices in the development and maintenance of trails and active transportation networks, and support equitable access to trails in all communities in the Near North.

**Priority Statement: Support the development, enhancement, expansion and connection of sustainable trails and active transportation networks in all communities across the region**

**Objective 1: To support the completion of the primary trail corridors that connect in all directions around the region**

- Advocate for improved cycling facilities on provincial highways that form part of the province-wide cycling network as a primary or connecting route with attention to the Voyageur Cycling Route designated sections
- Develop the regional CN Rail properties in partnership with Near North Trails Association
- Revisit development of trail corridor that connects to the northern reaches of the region (Old Ferguson Road or other)
- Explore partnership opportunities with Nipissing First Nation for rail trail west of North Bay

**Objective 2: To enhance the trail user experience by supporting trail improvements and regional trail connections**

- Work with local municipalities to improve cycling facilities on the Voyageur Cycling Route with priority focus on the Near North segment
- Work with Trail Partners to ensure stewardship of all sections of the Trans Canada Trail through the Near North
- Advocate for bicycle facility improvements along the Voyageur Cycling Route working with municipalities
- Develop trail signage partnerships to improve wayfinding
- Support the development of trail amenities such as washrooms and potable water along remote sections of cycling routes/ trails



**Objective 3: To continue in a supporting role for the planning and development of local trails and active transportation networks with Trail Partners**

- Support the Almaguin Community Trails to develop a competition level facility for cross-country skiing and running
- Continue to support local trail initiatives as they emerge
- Assist with revitalization of Forgotten Trails Association
- Support local municipalities to develop active transportation and trails master plans
- Fundraising support to Trail Partners to assist in trail development and maintenance
- Support equitable access to trails in all communities across the region for health and well-being
- Complete the Voyer Trail between Corbeil and North Bay
- Work with North Bay Mountain Bike Association to develop a sanctioned trail system along NB's Escarpment that supports a variety of trail uses
- Support the efforts of the Near North Trails Association in the development of the region's snowmobile product
- Support the efforts of Voyageur Multi-use Trails (VMUTS) in the development of the region's ATV product
- Establish a Trail Stewardship Program to support trail managers
- Develop a formal Trail Use Tracking program to demonstrate return on investment to municipal and regional Trail Partners

**Objective 4: To maintain physical trail connections to provincially and nationally significant trail networks**

- Continue to support Trail Partners in Eastern Ontario in the designation of the Voyageur Cycling Route through Eastern Ontario to National Capital Region and Quebec's La Route Verte for provincial and inter-provincial cycling route connections
- Maintain the Voyageur Cycling Route/ TCT connection to the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail at Sudbury





## Priority 4: Marketing & Promotion

Discovery Routes encompasses a vast network of land and water trails that showcase the diverse and rugged landscapes of Ontario's Near North while celebrating the region's rich natural and cultural heritage. By increasing the profile of Discovery Routes and working with Trails Partners to develop programs and services that encourage the safe and responsible use of the trails and inspire active lifestyles connected to nature and the outdoors, the organization is contributing to the quality of life of local citizens while supporting the region's economy through local, regional and national tourism.

**Priority Statement:** Increase the profile of Discovery Routes in order to more positively contribute to the well-being of local citizens through trail use while supporting Trail Partners' efforts to position the region as an outdoor adventure destination

### **Objective 1: To increase the profile of Discovery Routes - locally and regionally**

- Develop an annual Impact Report that demonstrates work of Discovery Routes' and its Trail Partners
- Develop a Communications Strategy to increase the profile of Discovery Routes and effectively focus resources to maximize communication impact
- Develop a Discovery Routes Trails Ambassadors Program

### **Objective 2: To increase use of local trails and active transportation routes in a safe and responsible manner**

- Collaborate with businesses/ employers for workplace wellness initiatives
- Develop programs that promote the safe and responsible use of trails and active transportation networks
- Support local trail events and activities
- Provide up-to-date information on local trails for trail users
- Inspire deeper connections to Northeastern Ontario's landscapes and heritage through trails

### **Objective 3: To support Trail Partners' efforts to develop the region as an outdoor adventure destination and help communities reach tourism targets**

- Expand the Trail Experiences Program to appeal to a broader audience through varied trail experiences (hiking, paddling, off-road cycling)
- Build strategic relationships to market the trails through partnerships and collaborations amongst the diverse network of industry stakeholders
- Implement the Voyageur Cycling Route Marketing Strategy with focus on Northeastern Ontario
- Collaborate with the Trans Canada Trail Foundation to celebrate the Near North's TCT connections



PRIORITY			Sustainability & Governance							
Priority Statement			Ensure the stability and long term continuity of Discovery Routes through strong governance, human resource capacity and a solid and diverse funding base.							
Objectives & Action Items			Person / Group Responsible	Revenue Potential	Timeline					Key Deliverables
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Objective 1: To establish a reliable and diverse revenue base to support core funding requirements and supports to Trails Partners										
New Action	Develop a fundraising strategy that focusses on organizational funding requirements as well as funding supports for local Trails Partners		board/ staff/ consultant	no						A consultant with expertise in fundraising helps to develop the fundraising strategy that guides staff and volunteers in decision making surrounding fundraising efforts
New Action	Implement actions recommended in the fundraising strategy		staff	med						Targeted fundraising campaigns for DR programs (eg. ReCycle Bikes)
			staff/ trail partners	med						Collaborate with Trails Partners for trail project funding
			staff/ board	med						General fundraising for core funding requirements
			TBD	TBD						Create a local trail development fund (TBD)
			TBD	TBD						Form a Fundraising Committee (TBD)
			TBD	TBD						Develop a signature fundraising event (TBD)
Action	Solicit project-based grants that include an administration fee whenever possible		staff	high						Grants and subsidies to carry out programs and services and support operational expenses
Action	Develop fee-for-service programs and services to be delivered by DRTO staff and volunteers		staff	high						Develop partner agreements with stakeholders in different sectors (tourism, health promotion) that define programs and/or services and assigns monetary and in-kind value to services provided by DRTO
			volunteers	low						Deliver bike repair workshops to local community agencies, organizations and businesses
			staff	low						Identify programs within Community Bicycle Education Program with revenue potential
			staff/ volunteers	med						Create content in the area of outdoor adventure tourism for travel blogs and other media
Objective 2: To maintain strong governance that uses strengths to achieve organizational sustainability										
Action	Clarify role and areas of accountability for Directors and Officers		Board	no						Include Board member job descriptions to DRTO Bylaw No. 1
			staff	no						Develop and distribute a Board Members Manual
New	Approval of Strategic Plan at Annual Meeting		Board	no						Presentation and Approval of 2022-2027 Strategic Plan at 2022 Annual Meeting
New	Develop an Operational Reserve Fund Policy		Board	no						Board approved Policy to clarify use of operational reserve funds
New	Review and Update DRTO Policies and Procedures Manual		staff/ board	no						Board approved Policies and Procedures Manual
New	Ensure wide geographic and broad sector representation on Board of Directors		staff/ board	no						Define Trail Partners roles within DR's governance structure
			staff/ board	no						Recruit new Board members to fill gaps in representation
Objective 3: To ensure human resource capacity to sustain the organization and achieve its mission effectively and efficiently										
Action	Develop a succession plan for key Board and staff positions		Board	no						Succession plan developed with input from a Board and staff
Action	Provide volunteer opportunities for youth and promote through high schools		Staff	no						ReCycle Bikes student mentorship
New Action	Provide staff and volunteer development opportunities to increase skills and expertise in the areas of human and financial resources, NFP management and best practices in sustainable trail and active transportation development		board/ staff	no						Staff and Board members attend sector conferences, webinars, etc for professional development
New Action	Increase volunteer engagement and recognition		staff	no						Recognize volunteers as part of the trail stewardship program (see objective under Trail Systems)
			staff	no						Provide volunteer opportunities to feel connected to the organization including opportunities for professional and personal development
			staff	low						Establish themes and recruit guest speakers for Annual Meeting to develop skills and enthusiasm, and revenue potential
			staff	no						Assist Trail Partners with volunteer recruitment

PRIORITY		Partnerships & Communication							
Priority Statement		Develop and establish committed partnerships and strong communication practices with Discovery Routes’ Trails Partners							
Objectives & Action Items		Person / Group Responsible	Revenue Potential	Timeline					Key Deliverables
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Objective 1: To develop and implement a collaborative and coordinated Communications Strategy									
Action	Develop a Communications Strategy to increase the profile of Discovery Routes	Staff/ Board	no						A Communications Strategy is developed that effectively focusses resources to maximize communication impact
		staff	no						Communications Strategy includes a Municipal/ First Nations Outreach Plan
		staff	low						Social Media strategy for building profile of Discovery Routes
New Action	Implement the Communications Strategy	staff	no						Set targets for engaged Trails Partners including municipalities/ FN
		staff/ board	no						Relationships are developed with local media
		staff	no						Regular updates to municipalities on trail and active transportation funding opportunities
		staff	no						Accurate and up-to-date trail and cycling route information and profile of Discovery Routes on all Municipal Trail Partner websites
Objective 2: To establish a strong committed partnership network with Discovery Routes acting as a leader in the trails community									
Action	Foster relationships with new and current Trail Partners with a diversity in geography, age, trail interest and community connections	staff	no						Partner list with identified stakeholder affiliation with DRT0
		staff	low						Identify new partner opportunities such as Ontario Parks
		staff	low						Identify and communicate participatory programs for Trail Partners so they feel connected to DR
		staff	no						Increased Trail Partner participation
Action	Maintain membership and engagement with provincial and national organizations and agencies with a trail related mandate	staff	no						Membership with Ontario Trails Council Engagement with Trans Canada Trail, Share the Road Coalition, Waterfront Regeneration Trust, etc
		Staff/ Board	no						Attend summits, conferences, and meetings to provide updates on Discovery Routes activities and professional development for staff and Board members
Action	Strengthen government relations toward collective outcomes and impacts	staff	no						Engagement with provincial and federal governmental agencies including Ministers and senior staff and regularly provide organizational updates
		Board and staff	no						Local municipalities are kept aware of programs so they can speak directly about local initiatives at AMO, FONOM, etc
		Board and staff	no						Key local politicians are identified to champion the trails and ongoing initiatives of the organization
New Action	Develop communication tools to assist trail managers to communicate with trail users	outsource	no						Interactive tool on website to allow trail users to communicate trail conditions - Trail Partners are able to view and comment
New Action	Increase trail sector capacity and knowledge	staff	no						Best practices in trail and active transportation development, such as infrastructure improvement, marketing and resource development strategies are shared with Trail Partners
New Action	Improve cultural connections and heritage appreciation	staff and Board	no						Recognition and acknowledgement of Indigenous heritage on website and trail promotions
		Board	no						Indigenous communities representation on Board of Directors
		staff	no						Outreach to knowledge keepers, storytellers and diverse communities to share stories and provide interpretation of local trails (See Marketing & Promotion)
New Action	Improve engagement with local Indigenous communities that support shared stewardship	staff/ trail partner	no						Programs that support cross-cultural exchange of knowledge



PRIORITY			Trail Systems							
Priority Statement			Support the development, enhancement, expansion and connection of sustainable trails and active transportation networks in all communities across the region							
Objectives and Action Items			Person / Group Responsible	Revenue Potential	Timeline					Key Deliverables
					Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Objective 1: To support the completion of the primary trail corridors that connect in all directions around the region										
Action	Advocate for improved cycling facilities on provincial highways that form part of the province-wide cycling network as a primary or connecting route with attention to the Voyageur Cycling Route designated sections of provincial highways.	staff/ trail partners	no						Advocate for improvements on Hwy 17 between North Bay and Sturgeon Falls	
		staff/ trail partners	no						Advocate for improvements on Hwy 17 between Hagar and Coniston	
		staff	no						Coordinate with MTO for installation of VCR/ TCT signs on Hwy 64	
		staff/ trail partner	no						Partnership with Almaguin Highlands for cycling facilities in the southern part of the region	
		staff/ trail partners	no						Advocate for improvements on Hwy 17 between Mattawa and Deep River as interim cycling route	
Action	Revisit development of trail corridor that connects to the northern reaches of the region (Old Ferguson Road or other)	staff	?						TBD	
Action	Explore partnership opportunities with Nipissing First Nation for rail trail west of North Bay	Trail Partner	?						TBD	
New Action	Develop the regional CN Rail properties in partnership with Near North Trails Association	TCT/ DR	no						Secure beneficial ownership of rail properties (Beachburg and Newmarket)	
		staff/ NNTA	no						Develop legally binding Land Use Permit and partnership with NNTA	
		staff/ NNTA	low						Develop a Trail Management Plan in partnership with NNTA	
		staff/ trail partners	low						Explore partnership opportunities with Chisholm Township/ Township of West Nipissing	
Objective 2: To enhance the trail user experience by supporting trail improvements and regional trail connections										
Action	Work with local municipalities to improve cycling facilities on the Voyageur Cycling Route with priority focus on the Near North segment	volunteers	no						Preform an annual route and sign conditions audit to ensure TCT/ VCR signs are maintained in all host municipalities	
		staff/ trail partners	no						Support local communities in the connection of Ottawa Valley Rail Trail through Township Papineau-Cameron and Town of Mattawa	
Action	Advocate for bicycle facility improvements along the Voyageur Cycling Route working with municipalities	staff/ trail partner	no						Consideration for cyclists in maintenance practices on gravel road sections of VCR through Twp of Calvin and Papineau Cameron	
		staff	no						Provide municipalities along the VCR with best practices in road maintenance for cyclists	
		staff/ trail partner	no						VCR is re-routed near Mattawa	
New Action	Work with Trail Partners to ensure stewardship of all sections of the Trans Canada Trail through the Near North	DR/ Trail Partners	no						Volunteers are recruited for annual route and signage audit of TCT along all sections as part of a Trail Stewardship/ Ambassador Program	
		DR/ Forgotten Trails	no						An active Trail Partner is established along Old Nipissing Road/ TCT	
		Callander	no						Improved alignment of TCT in the Municipality of Callander	
New Action	Develop trail signage partnerships to improve wayfinding such as trailheads and navigational products	staff							Trails in the Forgotten Trails network are signed with wayfinding aids	
		staff	no						TCT roadway signs installed through Nipissing Twp	

		North Bay	no						West link of KPW signed with TCT/ VCR signs
		trail partner	no						Wayfinding signage and information signage on VCR east of Mattawa
New Action	Support the development of trail amenities such as washrooms and potable water along remote sections of cycling routes/ trails	staff	low						Review VCR Marketing Strategy for market-ready sections of VCR and expand the Ontario by Bike Bicycle Friendly Business program to service gap areas
		staff	no						Alerts to municipalities and other trail managers when funding opportunities arise
Objective 3: To continue in a supporting role for the planning and development of local trails and active transportation networks with Trail Partners									
Action	Support the Almaguin Community Trails to develop a competition level facility for cross-country skiing and running	Almaguin Trails	no						Land Use Agreement with Near North District School Board is maintained
		Almaguin Trails	low						Fundraising support and financial service supports to volunteers are in place
Action	Continue to support local trail initiatives as they emerge	staff/ Trail Partner	?						TBD
Action	Complete the Voyer Trail between Corbeil and North Bay	trail partner	no						Trail connection between Corbeil and North Bay
Action	Work with Laurentian Escarpment Conservation Area and NB Mtn Bike Association to develop a sanctioned trail system along NB’s escarpment that supports a variety of trail uses	LECA	no						Sustainable trail system supporting a variety of non-motorized uses is open to the public
Action	Support the efforts of the Near North Trails Association in the development of the region’s snowmobile product	Staff/ Trail Partner	low						TBD
Action	Support the efforts of Voyageur Multi-use Trails (VMUTS) in the development of the region’s ATV product	Staff/ Trail Partner	no						TBD
New Action	Assist with revitalization of Forgotten Trails Association	staff/ trail partner	no						Forgotten Trails has a thriving network of volunteer trail stewards for each of the trails in their network
New Action	Support local municipalities to develop active transportation and trails master plans	staff	no						Participate and/ or provide comments on Municipal Active Transportation and Trail Plans
New Action	Fundraising support to Trail Partners to assist in trail development and maintenance	staff/ volunteers	low						Ongoing supports to partners including NB Mtn Bike Assoc and Almaguin Community Trails
		TBD	TBD						Other deliverables to be determined by Fundraising Strategy
New Action	Support equitable access to trails in all communities across the region for health and well-being	staff/ volunteers	no						An inventory of informal/ unmanaged trails
		trail partner	no						Advocacy for winter trail maintenance such as parking lot clearing in communities with limited winter facilities
		staff/ board	no						Support volunteer development in areas where there are limited or no trail facilities
New Action	Establish a Trail Stewardship Program to support trail managers	staff	no						A Trail Stewardship Program is in place
		staff/ board	no						Volunteers are recognized as part of the trail stewardship program
New Action	Develop a formal Trail Use Tracking program to demonstrates return on investment to municipal and regional trail partners	staff/ trail partners	no						Use data available thru strava, trailforks, eco-counters to capture trail use
		staff	no						Set parameters for trail tracking program
		staff	no						Share results of trail tracking with Trail Partners and funders
Objective 4: To maintain physical trail connections to provincially and nationally significant trail networks									
Action	Maintain the Voyageur Cycling Route/ TCT connection to the Great Lakes Waterfront Trail at Sudbury	staff	no						Connection to Great Lakes Waterfront Trail is maintained
New Action	Continue to support Trail Partners in Eastern Ontario in the designation of the Voyageur Cycling Route through Eastern Ontario to the National Capital Region and Quebec's La Route Verte for provincial and inter-provincial cycling route connections	staff/ trail partner	med						Continued partnerships with stakeholders in Eastern Ontario including Ottawa Valley Cycling and Active Transportation Alliance (OVCATA) and County of Renfrew
		trail partner	low						Continue to monitor and support the efforts of Ottawa Valley Recreational Trail/ Voyageur Cycling Route to connect Papineau-Cameron and Mattawa - Renfrew County

PRIORITY		Marketing & Promotion							
Priority Statement		Increase the profile of Discovery Routes in order to more positively contribute to the well-being of local citizens through trail use while supporting Trail Partners’ efforts to position the region as an outdoor adventure destination							
Objectives & Action Items		Person / Group Responsible	Revenue Potential	Timeline					Key Deliverables
				Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Objective 1: To increase the profile of Discovery Routes - locally and regionally									
New Action	Develop an annual Impact Report that demonstrates work of Discovery Routes' and its Trail Partners	staff	no						Impact Report is presented to membership at Annual Meeting and circulated to Trail Partners, stakeholders and the media
New Action	Develop a Communications Strategy to increase the profile of Discovery Routes and effectively focus resources to maximize communication impact	staff/ Board	no						See Objectives under Partnerships & Communications
New Action	Develop a Discovery Routes Ambassadors Program	staff	no						Local content creators and trail users are recruited to become Ambassadors
		staff	no						Incentives for Ambassadors to promote DR on social media
Objective 2: To increase use of local trails and active transportation routes in a safe and responsible manner									
Action	Collaborate with businesses/ employers for workplace wellness initiatives	staff/ Health partners	At-cost						Group presentations/ workshops are scheduled and conducted that meet identified needs
		staff	At-cost						Promote trails through Health Unit programming and regional community health centers
Action	Develop programs that promote the safe and responsible use of trails and active transportation networks	staff/ volunteer	At-cost						Partnership with community safety agencies and health unit to deliver a Community Bicycle Education Program
		staff/ volunteers	At-cost						ReCycle Bikes Program continues to thrive and is self-sustaining
		staff	no						Municipalities assisted with road safety campaigns as they relate to active transportation
Action	Support local trail events and activities	staff	no						Promotion of local trail events on Discovery Routes social media and website
		staff							Volunteer recruitment system in place to support trail events
		staff	low						Fundraising support
Action	Provide up-to-date information on local trails for trail users	staff	high						New Adventure Trails Map with expanded content for Trail Experiences Program
		staff	low						Current and up-to-date listing of all managed trails across the region on discoveryroutes.ca
		outsource	high						Interactive trail mapping on website
		staff	no						Discovery Routes and trail content on all municipal trail partner websites and tourist sites
		staff	no						Discovery Routes promotional package developed for economic development agencies for new businesses coming to community
		staff	no						Regular communication with Trails Partners for trail updates, improvements, closures, etc...
Action	Inspire deeper connections to Northeastern Ontario's landscapes and heritage through trails	Board	no						Indigenous Land Acknowledgment on website
		staff	low						Outreach to knowledge keepers, storytellers and diverse communities to share stories and provide interpretation of local trails
		staff	no						An inventory of trail values such as heritage, natural environment, points of interests as documented in past Discovery Routes and other reports
Objective 3: To support Trail Partners' efforts to develop the region as an outdoor adventure destination and help communities reach tourism targets									
New Action	Expand the Trail Experiences Program to appeal to a broader audience through varied trail experiences (hiking, paddling, off-road cycling)	staff	med						Articles for a variety of trail activities/ experiences on tourism blogs, travel magazines, etc
		staff	no						A variety of marketing tactics are used to promote Experiences including digital marketing, print advertising, social media contests, etc



		staff	low					Paddling and hiking itineraries are added to the Trail Experiences website
New Action	Build strategic relationships to market the trails through partnerships and collaborations amongst the diverse network of industry stakeholders	staff	low					New partnerships developed with local businesses through Ontario by Bike network eg. links to bicycle-friendly businesses and attractions
		staff	low					Ontario Parks as partner to promote experiences in and around parks
		staff	low					Toolkit for communities and businesses that describes the characteristics of the cycle tourist target markets and outlines opportunities to leverage the Trail Experiences Program/ Voyageur Cycling Route brand and assets
		outsource						Partnership with tourism partners and municipalities to share geo-location data (location tags, points of interest)
		staff	low					Partner for trade shows, etc to include DR "product"
New Action	Implement the Voyageur Cycling Route Marketing Strategy with focus on Northeastern Ontario	staff	no					A variety of marketing tactics are used to attract visitors including digital marketing, print advertising, social media contests, etc
		staff	low					Training workshops in Mattawa, North Bay, West Nipissing and Sudbury East to prepare communities and businesses for cycle tourists
		staff	no					Coordinated marketing campaigns that build and maintain a strong and consistent brand through online and offline channels
		staff	low					Cost share agreements for Voyageur Cycling Route ongoing marketing
		staff	no					Evaluation of success of marketing investments by set targets, measured and analyzed consumer behaviour
		staff	low					Expanded marketing efforts into Eastern Ontario
New Action	Collaborate with the Trans Canada Trail Foundation to celebrate the Near North’s TCT connections	staff	med					TCT Trail Tourism program is implemented