Jack Lavigne • Master of Architecture Thesis • School of Architecture & Community Development • University of Detroit Mercy

MANITOU MIIKANA

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Developing opportunities for connection, education, and
preservation on Manitoulin Island, Ontario

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MANITOU

Gitche Manitou, is viewed as the creator by the Anishinaabe people. The Ojibwa word translates to: Great Spirit.

MAIIKANA

An element that connects places together. Within the Ojibwa language, the word translates to: a path, trail, or road.

AUTHOR'S CONNECTION

Growing up, I have always wished to pursue a career in architecture. This has been the case ever since I was six years old. I remember visiting my father's office and launching Minecraft on an adjacent desk, thinking I was part of the design team. More often than not, the design of my Minecraft projects fell on a digital and self-proclaimed Manitoulin Island.

It makes sense that I continue my youthful ambitions in developing an architectural exploration of this context. Manitoulin Island, located in Lake Huron in Ontario, is a location I visit frequently and one I hold a strong connection with. It is where my mother's side of the family comes from and where my grandparents still live. An Island with a rich prehistoric history significant to all of Ontario as well as sites revealing and educating on historical indigenous culture with a variety of vegetation and wildlife.
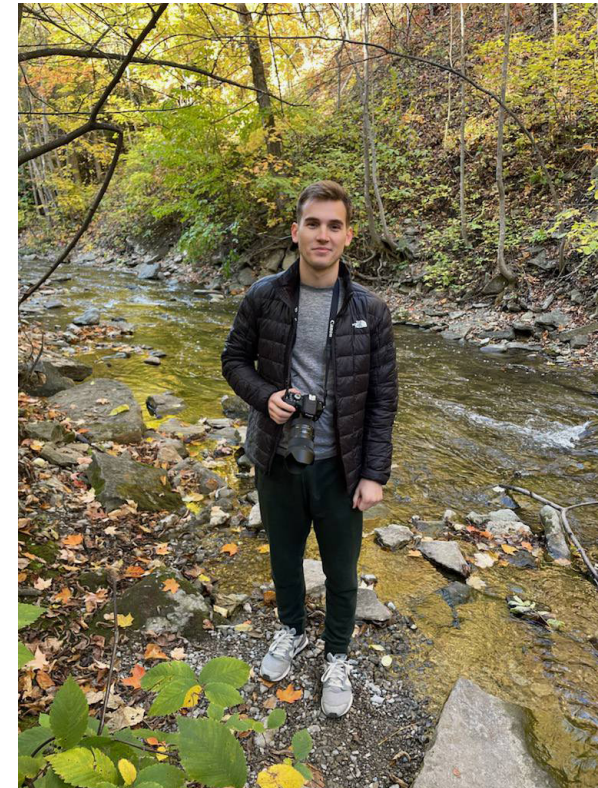
ABSTRACT

Manitou Miikana explores the potential of developing communal experiences as a means of addressing historical and tourist-related concerns within the Canadian rural landscape. The creation of these experiences also seeks to foster a deeper connection and respect for our natural environment. However, each context in Canada must be studied independently to facilitate a meaningful analysis and conceptual intervention. This statement is informed by the concepts of people's sense of place that exists in a specific location and placeknowing. Placeknowing specifically speaks to the importance of contextually-informed design, which is influenced by community understanding and societal interest. Manitoulin Island in Ontario, Canada, was selected as a site to study the potential and underlying challenges in rural areas due to its unique context, significant history, and the researcher's connection to the location.

The intention of this study was to analyze the existing challenges and issues specific to Manitoulin Island. These challenges relate to the increase in tourism and the resulting disconnections between residents and tourists. Observations of resident-tourist dynamics revealed pre-existing issues which relate to the historical disconnections between indigenous and non-indigenous communities. With the issues identified, the investigation looks to create meaningful and engaging communal experiences that will provide a sense of connection to the Island and its community, including resident groups and the increasing number of tourists. Several methods were used to understand the issues, needs, and challenges specific to Manitoulin, including analysis of historical treaties, community meetings and community engagement reports, resident and tourist interviews, architectural and rural case studies, and on-site documentation of conditions across seasons.

The outcomes of these studies revealed a specific desire for deeper connections between indigenous and non-indigenous residents. While tourists are interested in a more profound experience relating to the Island's environment and history, which would build resident and tourist relationships. Multiple frameworks were designed to address Manitoulin at the island, community, and individual scales. These scales are connected through the decided approach for Manitoulin: a pedestrian path network that will simultaneously address the lack of community linkages while creating an overall experience that brings attention to the environment and history, building awareness, respect, and understanding for both aspects. Supporting indoor spaces and wayfinding elements were developed, which emulate geological history as well as contemporary and historical Canadian art philosophies, providing further space for collective recreation and education.

The resulting proposal illustrates that interventions which support communal experiences address more than lacking physical connections but also emerging and historical issues and needs. The research demonstrates the ability to learn from a community and provide a comprehensive strategy rooted in its context. This strategy can influence design interventions for other rural contexts in Canada that are similar to Manitoulin Island.

EXPERIENCE TO ACTION

Personal experience has driven the focus of this thesis. The growth of tourism and seasonal residents has been witnessed firsthand. In the summer, Manitoulin Island has transitioned from a quiet and isolated location to an area of bustling tourists and lake retreaters. The Island itself has not reached a level of detrimental damage caused by this growth; however, fear is beginning to stir within the local rural communities as the growth does not appear to be minimizing.

A common mode of transportation to Manitoulin Island is the Chi-Chee Maun ferry located in Tobermory, Ontario. Tobermory is another rural tourist-dependant community which has grown extremely popular to the point of

environmental and social degradation. This calls for proactive consideration of what is to come for Manitoulin Island and how a conceptual intervention may engage this shift.

While the exploration of domestic rural communities is not a new research inquiry, this thesis aims to analyze the recent rise of this migration in Canada and adapt existing and developing strategies into a spatial response. This will be crucial in mitigating the effect future development has or will have on the environment, which is interrelated with the character and identity of Manitoulin. Through this process, the needs and issues expressed directly by the local community will dictate necessary applications for intervention.
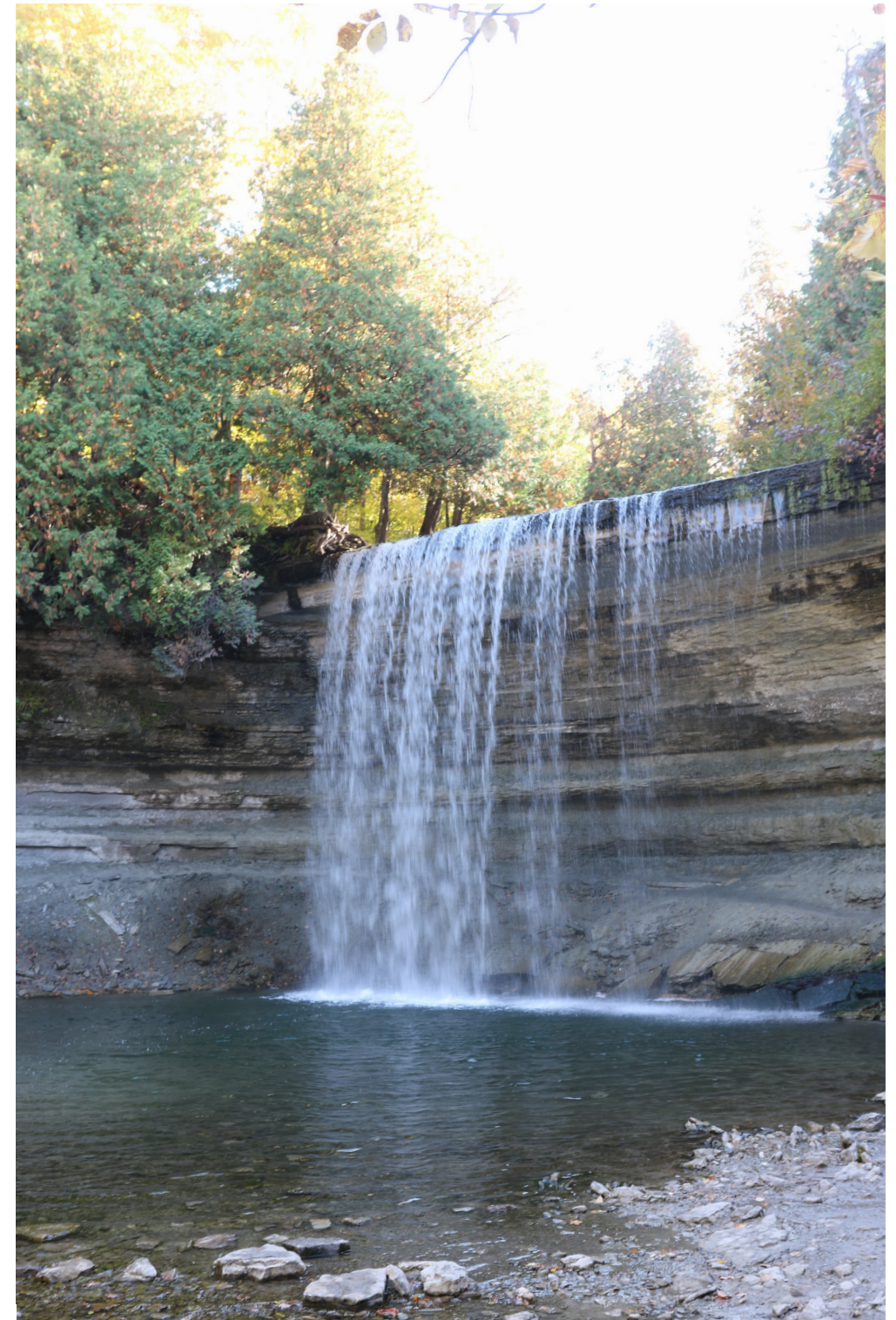
Fig. 1.0, Bridal Veil Falls

INTENT

This thesis provides an in-depth analysis of historical, existing and emerging issues, along with a conceptual architectural response for a community that needs proactive decision-making. The analysis may also serve as inspiration for other growing rural tourist-dependent locations managing similar concerns. The choice of Manitoulin Island as a focus to study peripheral areas in terms of tourism and development stretches beyond its unique characteristics. Manitoulin Island is a location connected to the researcher, and is why this study focuses on preserving its character, which encompasses the established community and environment.

THESIS
STATEMENT

Fig. 1.2, The Manitou Miikana system

Our inherent desire for a nature-based connection leads to the search for and exploration of rural communities and their predominantly natural settings. This anthropogenic form of visitation produces rifts between the tourists, the established community, and the environment. The tourism growth in these locations can stimulate opportunities and economic benefits for residents and businesses but advertises further capacity for increased development. Manitoulin Island, a large Island off the north coast of Lake Huron in Ontario, Canada, presents the opportunity for analyses and action in relation to these challenges. However, the recent increase in tourism on Manitoulin Island only highlighted pre-existing problems within its established communities. These challenges comprise of community and cultural disconnections as well as poor collaborations between stakeholders due to historical challenges, the Island's vast scale, and the absence of a unified governing organization. To ensure a resilient future for Manitoulin Island, it is crucial to address the changing tourism landscape and the persistent issues facing them through a cohesive and connected intervention.

The recent Manitoulin Island adaptation strategy was used as a framework for determining the needs of the Island and outlining a design strategy to address them. A main concept revealed from the public engagement reports within the adaptation strategy was accessibility involving the desire for pedestrian and cycling trails that connect communities with shared amenities. Research of comparable regions, such as Tobermory and Muskoka in Lake Huron, was conducted to identify common problems related to over-tourism and overcrowding that causes a strain on resident-tourist relations and the quality of the environment. These regions illustrated the need to rethink the current mode of tourism and how the industry integrates with the established communities. In combination with existing challenges, a distinctive and interrelated design approach is essential. Placeknowing is an alternative concept to Placemaking, that leverages the existing identity and culture to inform community planning and raises awareness of the intricate and turbulent history of Manitoulin. Additionally, sustainability is a critical concept for creating a resilient community that encompasses the resident-tourist relationship and the placeknowing concept. Sustainability involves balancing environmental, social, and economic aspects, which is crucial for creating a resilient community.

For this reason, the following research questions were asked: How can an intervention or experience influence a shift to the current mode of tourism on Manitoulin Island, taking into account the established community and environment? What opportunities exist to create new spaces that foster positive connections and relationships across Manitoulin? How can the proposed intervention or experience align with the unique character of Manitoulin Island and inspire future development to be in line with it? How can Manitoulin extend its active period and promote opportunities for community-based growth?

This context-led study aims to enhance the rural landscape of Manitoulin through the creation of a physical network comprised of pedestrian and non-motorized pathways with supporting architectural elements, which promote community and tourism connection, education, engagement, traditional mobility, and preservation. These conceptual connections are designed to

facilitate an alternative method to tourism on Manitoulin that reflects the values of both indigenous and non-indigenous residents. At the same time, this concept addresses the current concerns of the residents going beyond tourism and serves as a foundation for the future growth and development of Manitoulin Island.

The recent public engagement conducted by the Municipality of Central Manitoulin serves as a starting point for the design with the needs of established communities. This engagement was further refined through mixed methods, including in-depth personal interviews, which detail the resident's perspectives. On-site observations involved travelling across the Island by car and hiking when possible, along with photographs and videos capturing the current conditions of the Island. This visit to Manitoulin revealed the lack of connection between urban communities and the natural environment. The number of inaccessible spaces outside the core tourist areas also became apparent through this exploration. These experiences led to the analysis of strategies which lay the foundation for forming linkages and determining the impact of different program elements like the design of the PEI Island Walk and Joe Louis Greenway.

The conceptual strategy and the preceding Three-Framework were developed considering the recent Manitoulin Adaptation Strategy and the concerns expressed during the aforementioned public engagements and supplemental interviews. However, the bias of the researcher remains a factor. The designer has the final say on the placement of pathways, rest areas, washrooms, new program and what they perceive will be successful. There is also division among residents of Manitoulin Island regarding development, with some who would be opposed to this intervention. It will be important to emphasize the direct benefits to the Island's overall sustainability this concept can bring.

The inherent bias of the designer will always be a valid point of criticism, particularly when working in a context where they are not a resident. Despite the level of engagement and research conducted, the final design will ultimately reflect the architect's personal vision and beliefs. The large scale of Manitoulin Island and the complexities of land ownership present additional challenges in implementing such a comprehensive proposal. Finally, while there is evidence of growing interest in slow adventure tourism and a desire for this type of intervention from residents, the true success of the proposal can only be determined through actual implementation.

Architects often overlook rural areas in their efforts to address urban issues. In Canada, it has become increasingly important to support rural communities in their planning efforts due to the growing tourism industry and the challenges it presents. By fostering connections between communities and between residents and tourists, a socially sustainable environment can be created through collaboration and shared opportunities. This connection can also provide residents and tourists with a closer relationship to their history and environment, promoting education and exposure to the natural environment. It also leads to a more conscious mindset regarding their ecological effect. The methods for implementation, program, and Placeknowing can be utilized in related contexts.
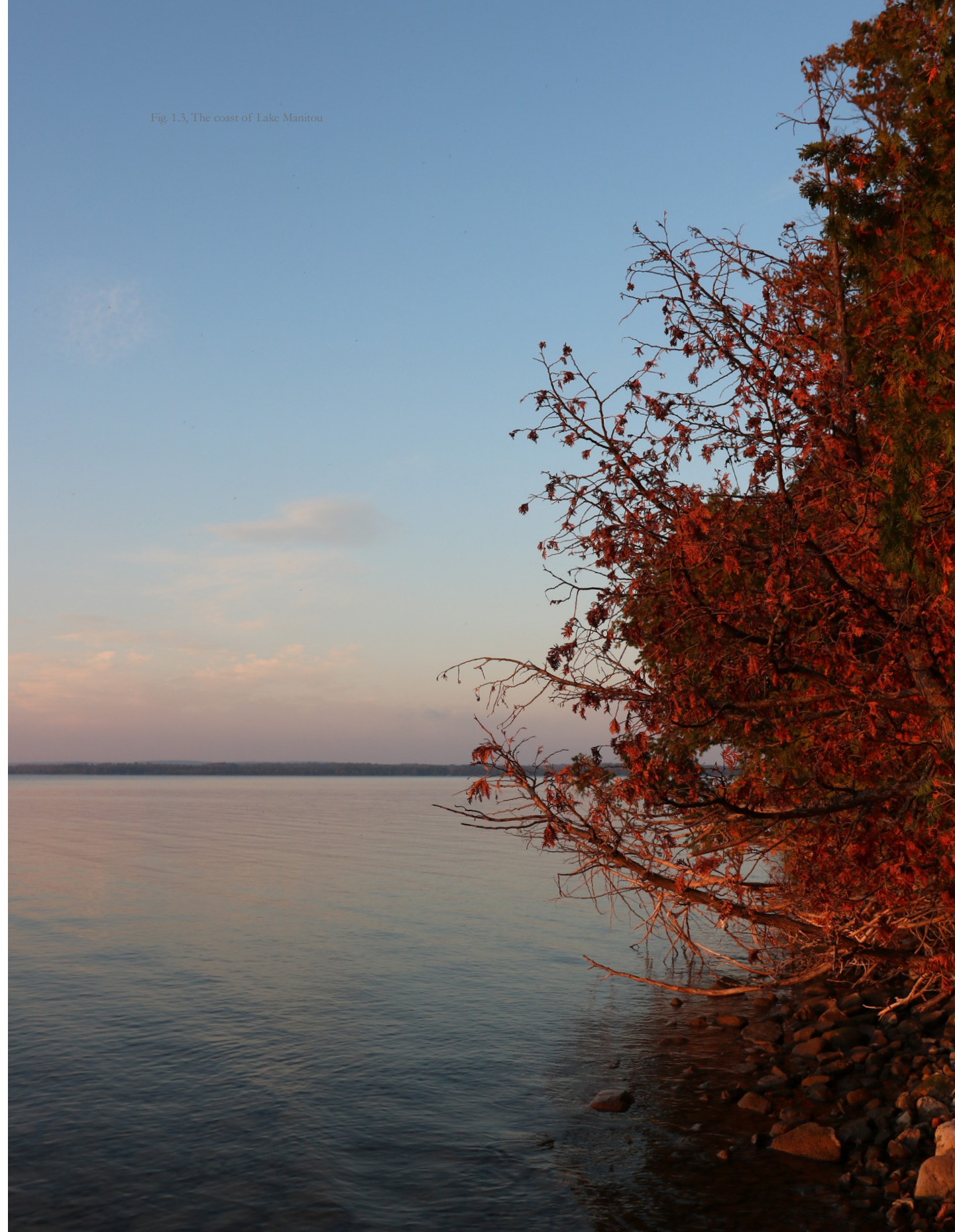
Fig. 1.4, Surveyor Robert Bell and his team in 1865 on Manitoulin Island, Source: Manitoulin Expositor

ONTARIO COLONIZATION

Like many other Canadian Provinces, Ontario has a long and complicated history of colonization. French and British traders and adventurers started to establish themselves in the region in the 16th century, frequently by forging connections with the local indigenous communities. The interaction between the settlers and the Indigenous peoples, however, grew more tense as European settlement and resource extraction grew. This led to a series of battles, treaties, and land transfers that resulted in the eventual eviction and marginalization of Indigenous populations. Indigenous peoples in Canada were forcibly assimilated into society in the late 19th and early 20th centuries through the use of measures like the Indian Act and residential schools (Hanson et al., 2020).

When this assimilation failed, the settlers wished to isolate the Indigenous people to avoid disturbances to their society.

One of these locations for isolation was Manitoulin Island which was already occupied by several Indigenous communities who have occupied Manitoulin Island since 1,000 BC. Manitoulin Island has quite a turbulent past, with a colonization history relevant to all of Ontario.

By 1866, settlers desired to occupy Manitoulin Island. While previously, the control over the indigenous communities was abrasively handled, the merging of these two people on Manitoulin Island appeared to be much more pleasant compared to the previous isolation. However, when this new group of people settled on Manitoulin Island, there were planned disconnections so these two groups of people would not interact. Today Manitoulin Island still reflects its coarse past caused by these planned disconnections between the new settlers and indigenous residents.

TODAY THE **SEPARATED COMMUNITIES** ON MANITOULIN ISLAND WISH TO CREATE A **SHARED** AND **CONNECTED** ENVIRONMENT WITH **COLLABORATION** AND **INTERACTION** AMONGST INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES. HOWEVER, THESE TWO GROUPS ARE NOT THE ONLY RELEVANT OCCUPANTS. HISTORY APPEARS TO BE REPEATING ITSELF WITH ANOTHER PARTY INTEGRATING ITSELF ON THE ISLAND. THIS WOULD BE THE STEADY **GROWTH OF TOURISM** ON MANITOULIN.

TOURISM ON MANITOULIN

In recent years, there has been a 60% increase in tourism on Manitoulin Island. Even though the island's economy has benefited from this growth, some locals still harbour resentment towards the tourism sector. However, considering that Manitoulin Island's main source of income is tourism, it is essential to explore all of the communities concerns and develop a strategy that allows tourism to continue benefiting and supporting Manitoulin in a sustainable and responsible manner.

To accomplish this, a comprehensive exploration and architectural response which considers tourism's economic, social, and environmental effects must be developed. The goal of this approach should be to solve the issues that both resident groups are confronting while preserving Manitoulin Island's distinctive character. This requires a full understanding of the problems that tourism raises, such as the risk of environmental deterioration, damage to all groups' sense of place and the neglect of the existing history and culture of the Island. At the same time, it's critical to acknowledge the potential advantages that tourism may have for a region, such as job development, year-round economic expansion, and enhanced cross-cultural interaction.

Developing a future that supports tourism but also the local community will require a collaborative effort from all stakeholders, including residents, businesses, local organizations and governmental bodies. Through this exploration, it will be possible to preserve the island's natural and cultural heritage for future generations. To begin this process, the tourism industry, including it's effects and the existing perception of it, must be understood.

Fig. 1.5, The town of Little Current, Manitoulin Island, Source: Manitoulin Expositor

> TOURISM IS A **SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC PHENOMENON** WHICH ENTAILS THE **MOVEMENT OF PEOPLE** TO COUNTRIES OR PLACES OUTSIDE THEIR USUAL ENVIRONMENT **FOR PERSONAL OR BUSINESS/PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES**. THESE PEOPLE ARE CALLED VISITORS (WHICH MAY BE EITHER TOURISTS OR EXCURSIONISTS; RESIDENTS OR NON-RESIDENTS) AND **TOURISM HAS TO DO WITH THEIR ACTIVITIES**, SOME OF WHICH IMPLY TOURISM EXPENDITURE

United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008
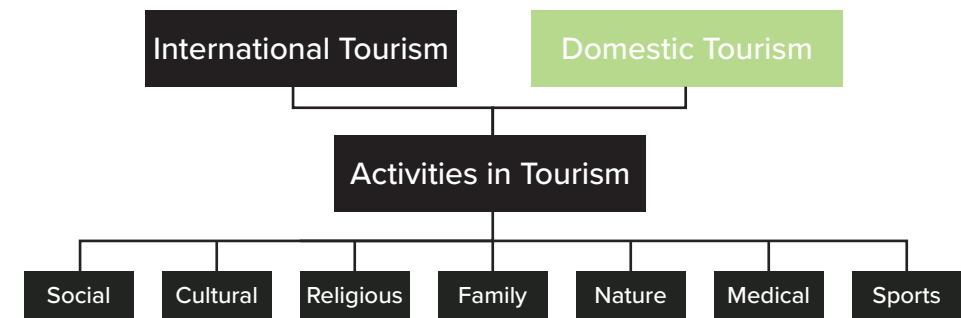
Fig. 1.6, Activities associated with tourism, based on: Tourism marketing the role of the internet Tourism destination: Greece

Fig. 1.7, Community-based Tourism, Source: George Steinmetz

Fig. 1.8, Mass Tourism, Source: Daniel Piraino

TOURISM OVERVIEW

The tourism industry has become a highly important economic driver across the world. While not all countries depend on tourism, many are at least somewhat reliant, and it has become the largest service industry in the world. The temporary migration of people in concept demonstrates benefits to both the visitor and the local community. This industry allows for the connection of people from varied cultures, permitting educational experiences for both sides that could otherwise not be possible. Consulting the core leisure activities that occur within tourism shows how this is achievable. This engagement forms new experiences for the individual visiting and can form education for one or both sides. The typology of activities is represented above in Figure 1.6.

Beyond these activities, which can create connections between tourists and residents, tourism also has the potential to benefit the community as a whole directly. Overall, more opportunities may open up for the local population if more people visit a location. This is especially true when looking at the possible benefits to the economy of the location. On top of this, more businesses can appear, creating jobs and facilities for residents.

Unfortunately, tourism is not as beneficial as it can and should be. There are many harmful aspects of it. Tourism continues to be a massively expansive industry, and this continuous growth has clear effects on communities. Mass tourism, in particular, can create negative economic, social, and environmental burdens on established communities when governments and developers become more focused on tourist comfort over everything else.

Mass tourism involves the large influx of visitation to a singular location primarily for recreation and leisure. It is a popular form of tourism because of its accessibility through affordable pricing and standardized packages allowing for ease of travel, which makes it a highly attractive choice for vacations(Naumov et al., 2016).

This form of tourism has its challenges. Accumulated interest in supporting development can lead to negative ecological impacts, negative sentiments may form between residents and tourists, and the overall fluctuation of the industry may form hardships in the community. Because of the apparent negative effect tourism can have, the concept of tourism is often viewed as entirely negative. However, as highlighted earlier, tourism may yield many positives for the community. These positives have been demonstrated more clearly through domestic tourism.

Fig. 1.9, Mass Tourism, Source: Aldric Rivat

DOMESTIC TOURISM

Similar to the industry as a whole, tourism is continuously growing within Canada. In general, it is a very important contributor to the economic growth inside of Canada, accounting for 1.9 million full-time jobs. Looking at Canadian tourism's past, in 2000, 674 million international tourists were recorded. By 2019, the number of international tourists had increased to 1.46 billion. However, the tourism industry is not dependent on these international travellers, as domestic tourism accounts for roughly 80% of the revenue generated by the industry.

Overall, governments implement and support domestic tourism to assist job and opportunity generation, mitigating poverty and allowing economic growth. This form of tourism also assists with the managing and upgrading of infrastructure. Domestic tourism is also an important subsection of tourism to support because of the seasonality that occurs (Turner et al., 2018, p. 0). Within this travel industry, international tourists primarily visit during the most attractive times, usually the summer. For this reason, it is important to promote travel domestically outside of these durations in order to support tourist-dependent areas. Another aspect of domestic tourism is the travel to rural areas. These areas are usually omitted by international tourists focused on the most popular destinations. Domestic tourism fills this void by attracting the local population to these niche environments.

Currently, 86% of Canadians live in urban sections of the country. Rural areas create an outlet for urban dwellers to connect with the natural environment. The ability of these areas to provide ecological experiences is the best way to build compassion for the natural environment.

Immersing in the natural environment also promotes environmental awareness and education. The interest in rural environments relates to our inherent desire for these experiences and is why these getaways have continuously become more popular. However, several factors have strengthened the attractiveness of these areas. This includes urban grievances that were enhanced by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Domestic-rural tourism has revealed strengths such as the benefits to the communities, an authentic interest in the local culture and an overall smaller environmental impact. Though this form of tourism has its challenges. Accumulated interest can lead to a negative ecological impact, a negative sentiment may form between residents and tourists, and the overall fluctuation of the industry forms hardships in the community.

Fluctuation of tourists forms hardships

Resident and tourist disconnection

Potential negative ecological impact

Fig. 1.10, Rural tourism challenges

THE RURAL SHIFT

This thesis began revolving around rural tourism because of the drastic growth, specifically witnessed in Muskoka and Tobermory firsthand by the researcher. These areas were clearly becoming overly populated beyond their capacity. Tourism in these areas appeared undefined and undirected, and this seasonal growth could be seen shifting the character and atmosphere of the place.

Further research has confirmed these assumptions with studies referencing the unprepared tourism growth in Canadian rural areas as well as articles and reports specific to communities which listed problems and requests for support. These rural challenges are explored in the next chapter and involve the overcrowding and takeover of public areas. This includes ignorance of ecological impact, disregard for the local population's history and culture, and the injection of urbanization through suburbs for second homes. As a result of this, there has been growing tourism resentment.

MANITOULIN ISLAND

TOBERMORY

MUSKOKA

MORE THAN TOURISM

The relationship between tourism and established rural communities within Canada is imperative for this analysis. This is not only true because of the consistent growth and resulting issues mentioned previously but also because these areas hold a dichotomy of reliance and resentment. Residents and local businesses of these communities have continuously shifted to rely on the growing tourism sector.

Through the research of colonization history and engagement with community members and the environment, it became apparent that a successful strategy and intervention must expand beyond tourism. Exploring tourism independently would be a disservice to the community and severely neglect the location's residents, history and culture. However, utilizing the growth of tourism can serve as a catalyst to address unique historical and contemporary needs and challenges in the area of study. To achieve this, a thoughtful and rooted approach is needed to retain or repair the cultural, social, ecological, and economic aspects of the place.

01 **RURAL CASE STUDIES**

02 **COMMUNITY STRATEGIES**

03 **SPATIAL RESPONSES**

04 **INDIGENOUS DESIGN PRINCIPLES**

For this reason, the purpose of the resulting investigation and intervention was to address these overarching tourism challenges that are common across Canada but within a specific community and, in doing so, develop an intervention that is contextualized and related to its unique surroundings.

To create a meaningful response that reveals and addresses underlying aspects of these rural areas, one must understand the quality and needs unique to the specific location. An analysis of existing and developing responses was conducted to tie this study to existing strategies and responses other communities have deemed important.

With the overarching challenges and existing strategies identified, an analysis of precedent projects was conducted to determine how these examined challenges have been addressed spatially. By examining these projects, it was possible to identify ways to support tourism and communal space while highlighting cultural, historical, and ecological aspects. Additionally, the investigation researched indigenous design principles to supplement the architectural studies, as these principles were vital bringing forward key aspects identified by indigenous planners and designers.

Fig. 2.0, Rural case studies

lake superior

SUDBURY

lake huron

TORONTO

lake ontario

lake michigan

DETROIT

lake erie

RED ROCK

TOBERMORY

MUSKOKA

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
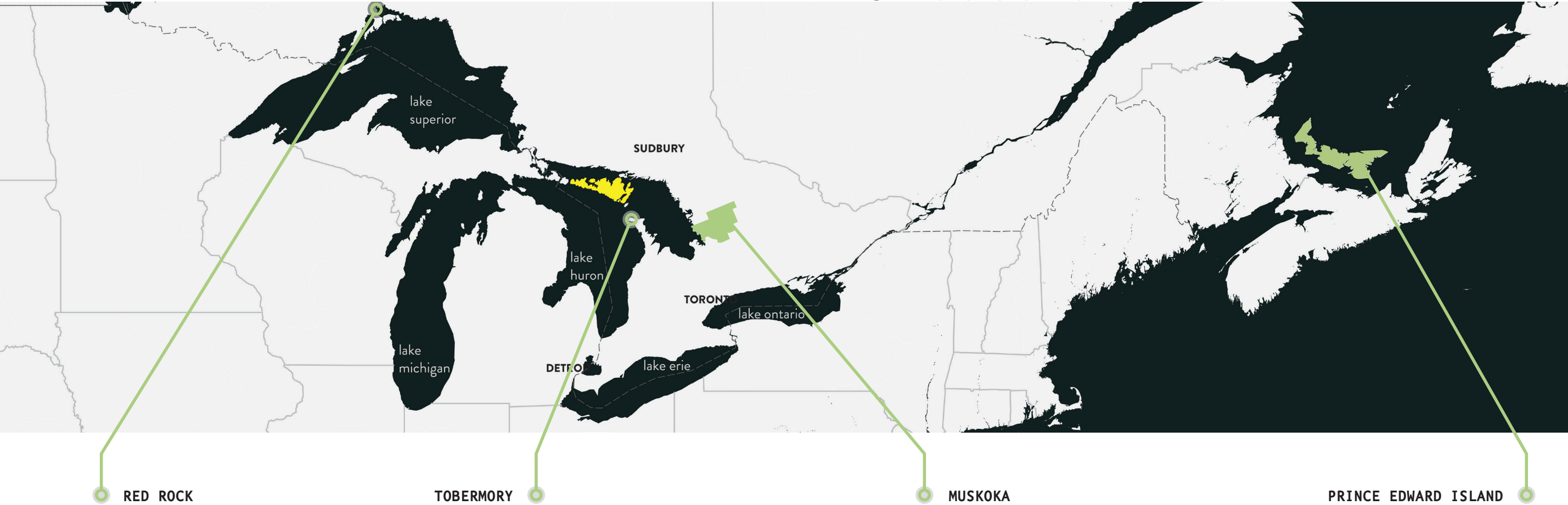
RURAL CASE STUDIES

To better understand the unique challenges faced by Manitoulin Island and develop an influential response, a comparative analysis of similar regions was conducted. First-hand experience and further research illustrated that rural communities across Canada have struggled with the lack of preparation and planning to support the rapid growth of tourism. The analysis conducted by Juste Rajaonson and Georges A. Tanguay revealed the environmental damage that

occurred through COVID-19 pandemic domestic tourism. Additionally, it emphasized the need to address these growing rural communities. The selected areas above were analyzed as they either presented challenges identified in previous studies or have already started implementing strategies to address tourism and community-based issues.

Tobermory and Muskoka present both environmental and social challenges

caused by increased tourism or lack of space. Red Rock and Prince Edward Island illustrate developing adaptation strategies regarding tourism, connectivity, sustainability and seasonality in response to corresponding concerns.

Each location struggled with a related but specific tourism challenge. In general, each area's tourism shift involves overcrowding, which includes ignorance of ecological impact, disregard for the

local population's history and culture, and the injection of urbanization through second-home development. These items have caused fear in the residents and are the reason for tourism resentment. It is essential to address this relationship because rural communities have become increasingly reliant on tourism, despite their resentment towards it.

MUSKOKA

Muskoka, a large region in Ontario, Canada, is a popular vacation spot for the nearby urban areas, most notably the city of Toronto. It offers similar outdoor recreation experiences to Manitoulin Island, with numerous lakes and boreal forests.

Muskoka has seen a large number of real-estate purchases and development, and the residential market has become massively inflated. The median price of property has gone from $250,000 in 2013 to $1.2 million currently. The reason for this expansion is predominantly caused by the increased interest in the rural way of life through second home purchases. This Continued development has sparked fear in the local community.

Muskoka presents the challenge of a shifting identity as it slowly becomes more and more urban. The developments lack concern for the existing sense of place and the effect on the environment.

Fig. 2.1, Tobermory, Source: taylorstrack

TOBERMORY

Tobermory is a small town located on the edge of the Bruce Peninsula in Ontario, Canada. It is home to the Chi-Chee Maun ferry, which travels back and forth to Manitoulin Island several times a day in the summer, late spring, and early fall.

Tobermory is dealing with a drastic increase in tourism. This community has insufficient space to handle the consistent growth of tourists, with 'Over-tourism' putting an incredible strain on the town and residents' quality of life. Areas meant for 100-200 people are dealing with tourist numbers of up to 1000 in the summer.

Tobermory exemplifies the issue of tourism resentment as the community is suffering more than it is benefiting from tourism. Tourists are failing to establish a relationship with the residents and respect the local culture and environment.

Fig. 2.2, Muskoka Cottages, Source: theglobeandmail

RED ROCK

Red Rock is an outdoor recreation-focused township in Ontario within the Thunder Bay region. This community has captured the attention of urban residents during the summer due to its natural environment and a large amount of access to the lake.

Red Rock was studied due to the community's acknowledgement of its reliance on tourism and the existing strategy that has been created. Tourism development is listed as crucial for the vitality of Red Rock as it draws external money into the community opening up new opportunities for the residents. Early analysis of their adaptation strategy

revealed the aspect of seasonality. Red Rock informed this study of the challenge of tourism fluctuation. Relevant to all tourist-dependent areas, visitors to Red Rock only exist within a brief summer period. This causes many problems for local businesses and, thus, the established community.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

PEI is the smallest province in Ontario. It is an Island on the east coast of Canada and is at a scale relatively similar to Manitoulin Island but much more developed and urban. PEI's economy has become reliant on its tourism industry and has shown similar challenges to the community of Red Rock.

However, through further exploration of Prince Edward Island, a physical development was revealed that seeks to expand its currently seasonal tourism industry. A non-for-profit organization developed a system of travel for visitors to journey around the entire province on foot. This simplistic trail developed

a form of tourism that promoted collaboration between communities and established visitation outside of the summer months as well as a large increase in environmentally-focused tourists. The spatial strategy also allowed a system of exploration to lesser-served areas on this vast island.

The most significant aspect of this idea in relation to this thesis was the connection created across the island that allowed interaction among tourists, residents and remote communities. Moreover, this approach provided tangible benefits to residents, reducing their resentment towards tourism.

Fig. 2.3, Red Rock, Ontario, Source: Wikipedia
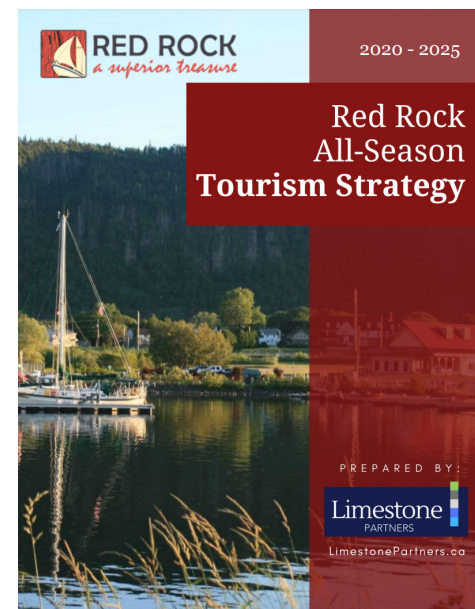
Fig. 2.4, Red Rock Strategy, Source: Red Rock Township

Fig. 2.5, PEI Island Walk route, Source: The Island Walk

SHELBY FARMS PARK   Marlon Blackwell Architects

Fig. 2.6, Event Centre, Source: James Corner Field Operations

COHESIVE

The introduction of communal programming and facilities to support the influx of tourism was determined to be essential based on the previous community analyses. Shelby Farms Park, located in Memphis, Tennessee, was studied for the spatial response to the lack of programming and identity. A master plan developed by James Corner Field Operations focused on the revitalization and showcase of natural ecological systems within the degrading penal farm.

Along with this development, Marlon Blackwell Architects developed a system of new structures and pavilions to support the revival project. These architectural elements introduce social and educational opportunities as well as general program ideas. The most influential aspect, however, is the unified character these buildings create across this large park. Shelby Farms now becomes a beautiful and connected landscape through these buildings constructed of a unified formal language and material palette.

SHERBOURNE COMMON PAVILION   Teeple Architects

Fig. 2.7, Sherbourne Common Pavilion, Source: Architizer

ECOLOGICAL

In consideration of these rural communities being located in predominately natural environments, any development should take careful consideration of their unique ecological qualities and systems. In the case of Sherbourne Common Pavilion, this consideration is moulded by highlighting the water-related systems on the site and the previous stream that ran through it. The project is a response to an area in Toronto, Ontario, prone to sewer overflow resulting in the contamination of local water sources.

The architects developed a structure which not only manages the storm-water purification system but promotes public interaction with this cleansed water through access and celebration across the site. A shallow pool adjacent to the structure freezes over in the winter seasons, expanding the use of this park for year-round recreation.

JOE LOUIS GREENWAY Smith Group
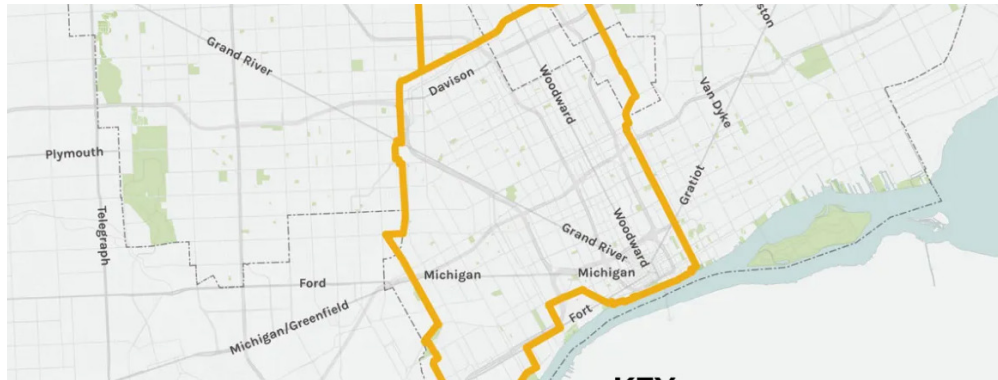
Fig. 2.8, Joe Louis Greenway route, Source: Detroit Greenways Coalition

CONNECTIVE

Prince Edward Island introduced the idea of connectivity and the potential of this characteristic within rural environments. Many rural communities are expansive and spread across a large footprint. This is especially true in the case of Manitoulin Island, where the historical impact of colonization has further caused challenges for connectivity.

Detroit, like many other urban centers, is dominated by the automobile. To provide stronger connectivity and mobility, the Joe Louis Greenway is being developed. Greenways, in general, provide communities with social, economic, and physical opportunities and benefits. Not only do they create a common outdoor experience for several areas within a city, but greenways also draw visitors who bring external funds into the local economy.

THE FORKS City of Winnipeg

Fig. 2.9, Skaters on the Red River in Winnipeg, Source: Heritage Winnipeg

SEASONAL

Red Rock introduced the challenges these communities face in relation to the seasonality of tourism. Their adaption strategy explains how this is not a unique issue to Red Rock but to rural communities in general. For this reason, an exploration of activation was produced, looking for ways in which communities and tourism could remain active. The season which poses the largest threat to this industry is the winter months.

The Forks in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, illustrates the potential the wintertime delivers. Utilizing a central river and adjacent park, various winter activities are created in Winnipeg. There are also heating areas to support the cold outdoors. Although this is an urban precedent, rural areas provide greater accessibility for the winter activities that The Forks creates. Rather the consideration should be focused on where these activities and social hubs can take place. This involves the consideration of interior spaces which will support a retreat from these cold activities.

Fig. 2.10, Indigenous Design Principles, Source: University of Manitoba, Indigenous Planning & Design Principles

INDIGENOUS DESIGN PRINCIPLES

INDIGENOUS DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The study takes into account existing spatial responses while also recognizing the profound impact of colonization on the way of life of the indigenous people, particularly on Manitoulin Island. Because this thesis aims to nullify historical disconnections and disruptions, indigenous design principles and a related project were used to further define the framing lens and concepts.

The principles on the left were developed by the University of Manitoba for their Campus Plan. These principles provide a foundation for what to take into account when engaging with indigenous culture and the natural environment.

An example of the successful application of these principles is present within the Indigenous Planning and Design Principles document. This project is a small bike kiosk located on the Manitoba campus. During the construction phases, there was the incorporation of Indigenous culture through the replanting and ground blessing ceremonies. The bike pavilion includes artistic elements as well.

Fig. 2.11, Successful implementation of these principles per the University, Source, University of Manitoba Students' Union

Relationships + Listening

Culturally Relevant Design

Respect Mother Earth

Community + Belonging

Seven Generations view

Economic

Social

Environmental

Social and cultural exchange

Quality of Environment

Quality of life

Topophilia

Tourist Selection

Ecology of Place

Communal participation

Culture + Identity

Seven Generations
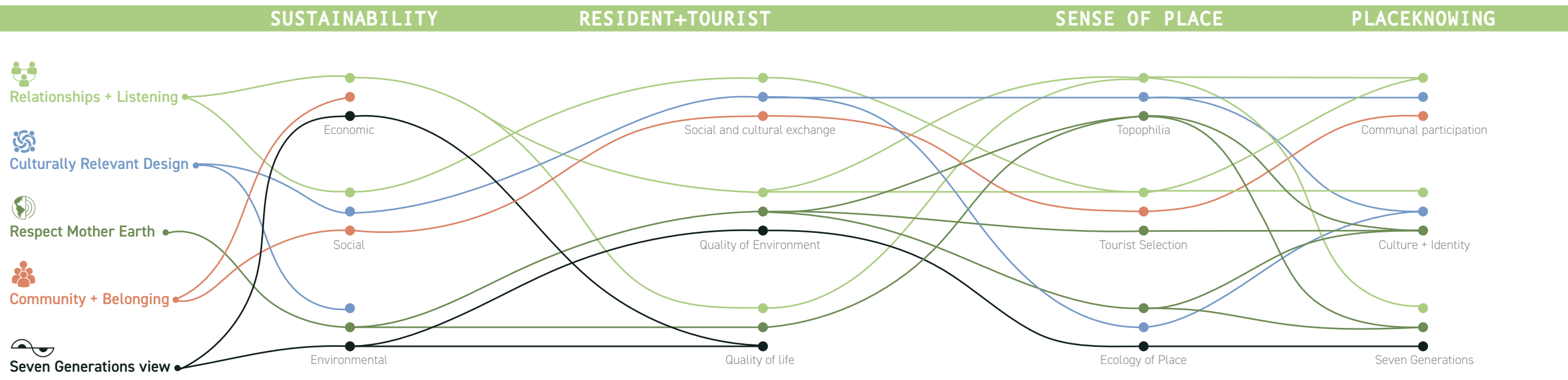
Fig. 2.12, The Manitou Miikana framing concepts and supplemental aspects connected to the Indigenous Design Principles

FRAMING CONCEPTS

All previous analyses, combined with early engagement and discussions on Manitoulin Island, informed the overarching conceptual framework that guided the final proposal. Acknowledging the struggles and strategies of external rural communities will allow this study to become relevant to areas beyond Manitoulin Island. The architectural responses display specific considerations that relate to these challenges in a spatial and physical manner. At the same time, the Indigenous Design Principles bring forth a historical, cultural, ecological, social and educational lens that moves past tourism and focuses on the established place.

The resulting Framing concepts identified are Sustainability, Resident and Tourist Relationships, Sense of Place, and Placeknowing. Each framing concept was reinforced with supplementary concepts from literature and precedents. The above diagram presents these supplemental concepts and illustrates their relevance through the visible interconnections with the Indigenous Design Principles from the University of Manitoba.

SUSTAINABILITY

This concept encompasses each aspect of sustainability, which involves environmental, social, and economic factors. The earlier analyses present that unbalance that exists within each of these aspects and illustrate why each subsection is necessary to consider. "Sustainability for rural areas is more than just a sustainable economic growth. The concept of sustainability in rural areas should integrate environmental, economical, cultural and social factors." (Trukhachev, 2014, p. 1)

RESIDENT + TOURIST RELATIONSHIPS

The concept of Resident and Tourist Relationships refers to the existing dynamics that exist between these two groups. This is an important concept to address as it envelops the social sustainability of Manitoulin and many other rural areas. "One of the crucial things for achieving and maintaining sustainable tourism development in a destination is to create a positive interaction between residents and foreign tourists." (Armenski, et al., 2011, p. 1)

SENSE OF PLACE

Sense of Place refers to the established connection an individual has to a location and what meaning has been assigned to it. It is separate but related to the concept of Placeknowing. Sense of Place looks to understand how people connect with a specific environment, both residents and tourists. "Place attachment, identity, and sense of place are a personal and important thing whether it be for those who live in a place or those who visit." (Chen, 2021, p. 2).

PLACEKNOWING

Placeknowing determines the success of an intervention through its ability to acknowledge, connect and retain what already exists within a place. Placeknowing, a concept tied to indigenous design and planning, is placemaking with the acknowledgement of the existing history, culture, and environment. "Placeknowing is grounded in the idea that places should be developed to acknowledge and sustain the meanings of culture and identity into the future." (Jojola, 2022)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Rural communities are managing large tourism influxes while still managing unsolved needs and issues. Tourism can be witnessed in shifting the character and atmosphere of these locations. This is due to the lack of planning, programming and consideration of historic and emerging challenges these areas face. In the case of these elements being addressed, they are prototypical or urban answers to a rural problem.

The communities rely on this tourism, and it provides important opportunities for urban inhabitants to experience and learn from their unique history, culture and environment.

Developed based on all previous analyses and exercises, these questions look to capture the framing concepts specifically for Manitoulin Island. They seek a study and strategy which responses to tourism and resident needs in a way that is deeply linked to the established location and sense of place. The questions encompass aspects such as tourism, accessibility, mobility, history, seasonality, memory, ecology, and communal recreation.

01 HOW CAN AN INTERVENTION OR EXPERIENCE INFLUENCE **A SHIFT TO THE CURRENT MODE OF TOURISM** ON MANITOULIN ISLAND, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT?

02 WHAT OPPORTUNITIES EXIST TO CREATE NEW SPACES **THAT FOSTER POSITIVE CONNECTIONS AND RELATIONSHIPS** ACROSS MANITOULIN ISLAND?

03 HOW CAN THE PROPOSED INTERVENTION OR EXPERIENCE **ALIGN WITH THE UNIQUE CHARACTER** OF MANITOULIN ISLAND AND INSPIRE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT TO BE IN LINE WITH IT?

04 HOW CAN MANITOULIN **EXTEND ITS ACTIVE PERIOD** AND **PROMOTE OPPORTUNITIES** FOR COMMUNITY-BASED GROWTH?

01

02

03 **MANITOULIN ISLAND [54]**
Context
History
Public Engagement
Four Pillars

04

05

06

MANITOULIN ISLAND

INTRO TO MANITOULIN

Manitoulin Island was chosen to study the growing shift within rural communities. It is the largest freshwater island in the world and a tourist-dependent area located off the north coast of Lake Huron. Manitoulin has a great variety of ecology with 900 species of plants which is equivalent to 1/5 of Canada's variety. The Island is nearly 80 miles wide and ranges from 38 to 6 miles long. Because of the island's scale, tremulous history, and tourism resentment, Manitoulin's overall community exists in a disconnected state.

Manitoulin Island presents great potential for studying the opportunities and effects a growing rural community has. It also presents the possibility of utilizing tourism adaptation to address community problems and divisions.

lake superior

SUDBURY

lake michigan

lake huron

TORONTO

lake o

DETROIT

lake erie
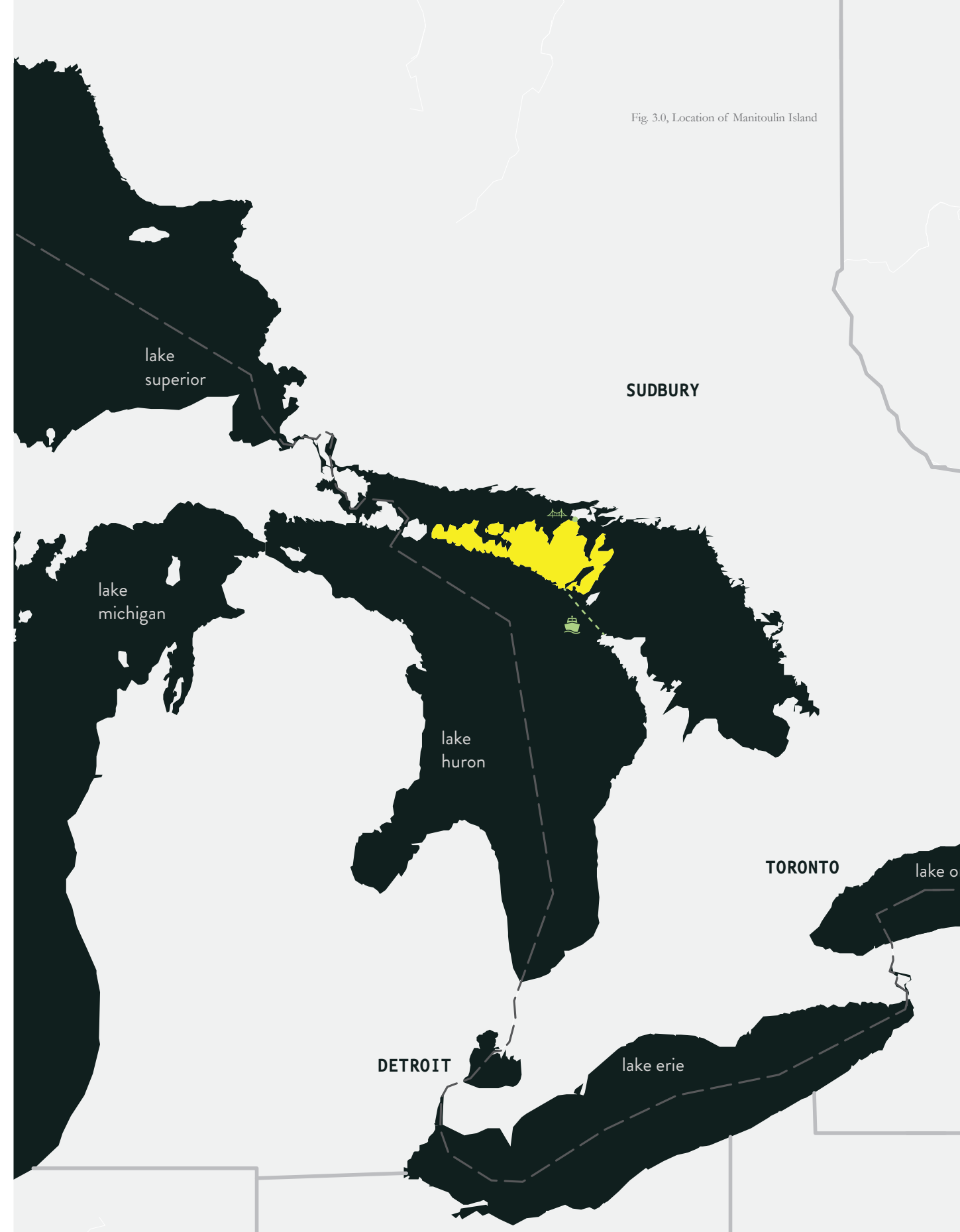
WHY MANITOULIN?

The purpose of this thesis was to address the overarching rural challenges that are common across Canada but within a specific community and, in doing so, develop a response which is rooted and connected to its specific context.

Manitoulin Island was of interest from the beginning because of its relevance and the author's personal connection to this location. But Manitoulin was also chosen because it calls for more than a tourism exploration. It is a very significant area in terms of its location, environment and history. Manitoulin Island holds a unique rock landscape composed of alvars which were carved by glaciers in 13,000 BC. It has a great variety of vegetation and prehistoric discoveries significant to all of Ontario. On top of all this, it has a turbulent history of colonization, which resulted in still relevant disconnections across its boundaries. The island also holds a growing tourism population and provides an accessible resource to analyze the growing rural trend. All these unique elements call for a response to balance Manitoulin's social, environmental and economic conditions.

Fig. 3.1, The shore of Lake Manitou

NORTH

0   5   10   20 Miles

Meldrum Bay

ZHIIBAAHAASING

Gore Bay

Kagawong

SUCKER CREEK

Little Current

SHESHEGWANING

BARRIE ISLAND

BILLINGS

NORTHEASTERN
MANITOULIN

SHEGUIDANDAH

GORDON

lake
Kagawong

WEST UNORGANIZED

M'CHIGEENG

Wikwemikong

MNIDOO MNISSING
PROVINCIAL PARK

ASSIGINACK

lake
mindemoya

PROVINCIAL PARKS

MISERY BAY
PROVINCIAL PARK

BURPEE & MILLS

lake
manitou

MUNICIPALITIES + FIRST NATIONS

CENTRAL
MANITOULIN

WIKWEMIKONG

Towns

Points of Entry

TEHKUMMAH

Manitowaning

Providence Bay

Mindemoya

South Baymouth

80 Miles wide
30-6 Miles long

Fig. 3.2, Map of Manitoulin Island

13,000 BC

Manitoulin Island is formed as we know it today following the last glaciation period. These glaciers are the cause of Manitoulin's unique surface composed of a prolific amount exposed limestone and dolostone.

Fig. 3.3, Alvars on Manitoulin, Source: Northern Ontario Travel

1,000 BC

The Island became home to the Native Anishinaabe people or the 'People of the Three Fires' made up of the Objibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Tribes.

Fig. 3.4, Early Iroquoian Tribe, Source: MHUGL

1648

A Jesuit missionary is sent to Manitoulin Island to spread the gospel to the Algonquin-speaking natives. The European missionaries ended up spreading previously unexposed diseases.

Fig. 3.5, Early interpretation of Manitoulin, 1670, Source: The Canoe and the Superpixel

1812–1862

Assimilation of the indigenous people into society failed so the government isolated them. Up until 1861, only indigenous people settled on Manitoulin. By 1862 the Island was divided into townships by the government.

Fig. 3.6, Surveyor Robert Bell and his team in 1865 on Manitoulin Island, Source: Manitoulin Expositor

1866–1974

Land is sold for 50¢ an acre. By 1931, a steamboat was bringing visitors to Manitoulin daily. By 1970 a hotel is built and the Manitoulin Expositor newspaper regularly advertises Manitoulin as a summer resort. The increase in tourism led to a large number small businesses as well as hotels, resorts, B&Bs, and campground developments.

Fig. 3.7, Manitoulin postcard Source: A Journey of Postcards

PRESENT

Today Manitoulin is known for its vibrant culture, historical significance in Ontario, and unique stone landscape. The diverse ecology and geography attract large numbers of visitors looking for outdoor recreation and leisure activities. This has led to both indigenous and non-indigenous residents to rely heavily on the tourism industry.

Fig. 3.8, The Chi-Cheemaun arriving in South Baymouth

Fig. 3.9, Ojibwe Birchback Canoe, Source: Native Hope

Fig. 3.10, Longhouse Interior, Source: The Canadian Encyclopedia

Fig. 3.11, Wigwam, Source: The Canadian Encyclopedia

TRADITIONAL MOBILITY

Contrasted to the three occupants of Manitoulin, in the past, the only group who lived on the island were the Anishinaabe people. One of the reasons it is important to analyze and apply a specific and specialized strategy to a singular area is because of the relevant history and culture that exists. On Manitoulin, there is a rich history of indigenous culture and traditions which were disrupted by the colonization of the Island.

Mobility and the nomadic lifestyle of the Anishinaabe people was a major aspect of their societies and beliefs. The present inaccessible and privatized Island hinders the ability of this exploration across Manitoulin. These issues can be addressed through the support of initiatives which promote the development of economic systems that align with the Anishinaabe values of access, mobility and education.

TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

On Manitoulin, there were two dominant architectural techniques. These include the Longhouse and the Wigwam. The design of these structures was deeply connected with their way of life and nomadic status on the island.

The Wigwams specifically are designed to be easily transportable to enable mobility across Manitoulin. The Longhouses were much larger and permanent. These structures served as areas of communal living and celebration. The Longhouses were particularly important in the winter, where people would socialize during the cold months.

"INDIGENOUS INTELLECTUAL TRADITIONS AND HISTORIES CONTAIN THEORIES, POLITICAL SYSTEMS, AND **WAYS OF LIFE THAT EXPLICITLY FEATURE CONSTANT MOTION** (OR MOBILITY) AS A THEME."

- Indigenous mobility traditions, colonialism, and the anthropocene, 2019

2016 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Accessibility

- **Develop accessible pedestrian/cycling trails** that **connect communities** with amenities

- Increase accessible and affordable housing

Development

- **Support all-year recreation programs** for all ages

- Support and promote Central Manitoulin as a development-friendly community

Character

- Develop and support **increased arts and culture**

- Develop tourism **products that preserve nature**

- Create an attractive community that is **welcoming for both residents and visitors**

Fig. 3.12, 2016 Engagement, Source: Municipality of Central Manitoulin

2021 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Sustainability

They want the **natural environment to remain clean and attractive and their businesses to be viable.**

Authenic + Inclusive

They want to see **tourism experiences that reflect the pace of life and culture of the communities**, as well as offer **opportunities for Indigenous and non-indigenous businesses and residents.**

Year-round Destination

They want to see Manitoulin and La Cloche become a **tourism destination that offers visitor experiences in all twelve months**, which will help to spread any concerns of over-tourism over a longer period of time and to improve business viability.

Fig. 3.13, 2021 Engagement, Source: Deloitte

DELOITTE 'TAKEAWAYS'

01 Natural assets, Indigenous culture, the variety and uniqueness of experiences, outdoor activities, and the laid back pace of life are viewed as strengths

02 Poor regional partnerships, **collaboration**, and **communication** are seen as major weaknesses.

03 Collaboration between Indigenous and non Indigenous is very important to develop

04 Businesses were **highly interested in a new wayfinding program**

05 More tourism businesses, restaurants and public washrooms are needed to support the growth.

06 A **top priority for stakeholders is creating a region wide** destination marketing and management **product**. This should **create connections between communities**.

Fig. 3.14, 2021 Manitoulin Adaptation Strategy Takeaways, Source: Deloitte

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Several public engagement reports were acquired and analyzed to determine further challenges and needs specific to Manitoulin Island. These were used to supplement the initial rural studies and spatial concepts and inform the overall design strategy for Manitoulin Island. Both engagement reports revealed the aspect of accessibility. Accessibility is also tied to the restricted mobility that was caused by colonization.

The first public engagements were conducted in 2016 by the Municipality of Central Manitoulin. The second engagement was conducted by an external consultant, Deloitte, in 2021. Residents expressed the need for community connections through new pedestrian and cycling trails that connect communities with amenities.

Providing connections through physical spaces would not only provide greater accessibility, and support for indigenous culture, but it also encompasses many other core values and desires highlighted by the residents. These include the need for authentic and inclusive experiences, year-round recreation, and tourism products that highlight nature and promote indigenous culture with increased collaboration amongst communities.

EXPLORATION TO REFLECTION

To gather a better understanding of the residents and environments of Manitoulin, an exploration was conducted. In order to provide a design strategy to address both tourism growth and underlying challenges that are environmentally sensitive but also meaningful and valuable requires an understanding of the current conditions and desires of the community. The intent of the resulting mapping and journey documentation on the right was to reflect on a site visit to Manitoulin Island. The images were used to view the relationship of the major towns on Manitoulin with the natural environment. These locations are pinpointed on the overarching map, which illustrates the journey.

The quotes were extracted from interviews conducted during the trip. The interviews were used to supplement the resident challenges and needs determined by the engagements and expand the existing knowledge of Manitoulin.

While the structure on the right represents the journey from August and October of 2022, a third site visit took place. Over the winter break, Manitoulin was visited once again to understand the potential and opportunities within the winter months. The conditions can be viewed within the photos on the next pages.
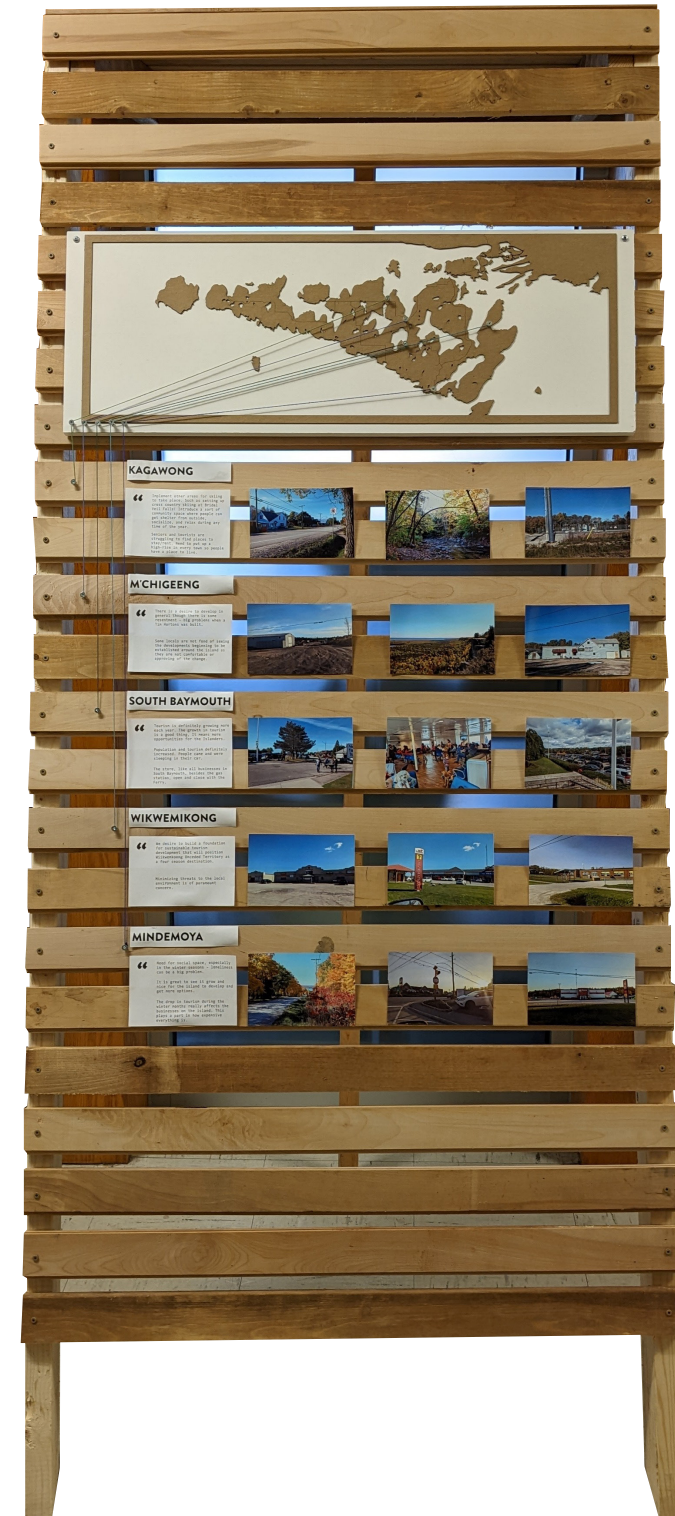
Fig. 3.15, Exploration of Manitoulin Island

Fig. 3.16, Summer and fall photos

Fig. 3.17, Winter photos

Manitoulin Trading Post

The store, like **all businesses in South Baymouth** besides the gas station, **open and close with the Ferry** This is **unlike Little Current** where businesses are able to **stay open** as they receive traffic from people coming to the Island.

Tourism has grown and recently has been huge - crazy in July and August **Most welcome the tourists**

Some folk usually the older population, **do not like the change and growth** on the Island.

Bou-Bah-Lou Candy Store

Oh businesses would **most certainly like to stay open all year** round.

Our new plan is to stay open the whole winter that is why **we have added food to our store The hope is that it will be enough** to keep us busy through the winter so we can keep working.

Lots of **businesses suddenly close** some days. This is caused by the lack of tourism **outside the main months**

It would be nice to have **something that inspired people to come.**

Island Home Outfittters

Business in the winter is from **all local** people we don't see tourism.

It would be **great to have** more **options in the winter**. People don't have anything to do or equipment for **activities**

It is **great to see it grow** and nice for the island to develop and get **more options**. There is a **desire to develop** though there is **some resentment**

We need a **space on the lake** for people to **gather**, have drinks and great food. **For tourism this is huge** as well.

We would like new experiences that **incorporate the natural environment**

In Mindemoya there is **no where** to go and **gather**. Seniors don't have places really either. A **space that facilitates everyone** would be really nice.

People are complaining about line ups but no one is working - If you **provide a fun place, people will** want to **work here.**

Kerr Dewers Hurcomb Island Residents

I can say that tourism is definitely growing more each year. The **growth in tourism is good** It means more **opportunities for** the **Islander's**

Some locals are not fond of seeing the **developments** as they are **not comfortable** or approving **of** the **change**.

After the months of **June-September** the number of **residents on the island drops off**

The **drop in tourism** during the **winter** really **affects the businesses** This **plays a part in how expensive everything is**

For places to stay open year round the **development of new events** /clubs and promotion of them would have to take place. **More activities**

Trails appropriate for winter use, and ice fishing tours and **other winter sports/activities** could draw people to the island during the off months of the year.

Introduce a sort of **community space** where people can get shelter from outside, socialize, and relax during any time of the year.

Although the increase amount of **tourism is great for the economy** on the island, the increased amount is **not good for** the condition of the **water**

There is a **need for social space. Especially in the winter** seasons as **loneliness** can be a big problem.

Fig. 3.18, Interview quotes connected to common elements
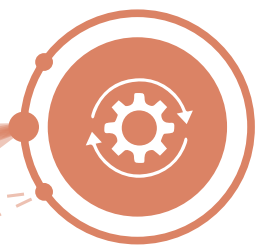
Development
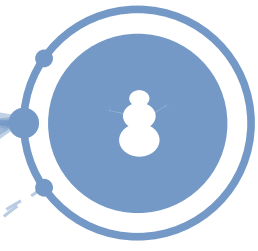
Winter

Social

1-ON-1 INTERVIEWS

In-person one on one interviews were used to supplement the results of the previous engagement reports and further understand how to address Manitoulin Island. Overall, the interviews aligned with the values expressed in the 2016 and 2021 engagement results. In regards to tourism, there was resentment expressed but also the acknowledgment of their reliance. Several comments were received that relate to winter activation, as many businesses are forced to close without summer tourism. Many comments were received relating to the need for communal space for recreation and general socialization as well.

" IT IS **GREAT TO SEE IT GROW** AND NICE FOR THE ISLAND TO DEVELOP AND GET **MORE OPTIONS**. THERE IS A DESIRE TO DEVELOP THOUGH **THERE IS SOME RESENTMENT**.

- MANITOULIN BUSINESS OWNER

" **TOURISM HAS GROWN** AND RECENTLY HAS BEEN HUGE. CRAZY IN JULY AND AUGUST. **MOST WELCOME THE TOURISTS. SOME FOLK**, USUALLY THE OLDER POPULATION, **DO NOT LIKE THE CHANGE AND GROWTH** ON THE ISLAND

- MANITOULIN RESIDENT

" LOTS OF **BUSINESSES SUDDENLY CLOSE** SOME DAYS. THIS IS CAUSED BY THE LACK OF TOURISM **OUTSIDE THE MAIN MONTHS.** IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE **SOMETHING THAT INSPIRED PEOPLE TO COME.**

- MANITOULIN BUSINESS OWNER

" **FOR PLACES TO STAY OPEN** YEAR ROUND THE **DEVELOPMENT OF NEW EVENTS/CLUBS** AND PROMOTION OF THEM WOULD HAVE TO TAKE PLACE. **MORE ACTIVITIES.**

- MANITOULIN RESIDENT

" WE NEED A **SPACE ON THE LAKE FOR PEOPLE TO GATHER**, HAVE DRINKS AND FOOD. **THIS IS HUGE FOR TOURISM AS WELL.**

- MANITOULIN BUSINESS OWNER

" WE WOULD LIKE NEW EXPERIENCES THAT **INCORPORATE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.**

- MANITOULIN BUSINESS OWNER

" IN MINDEMOYA **THERE IS NO WHERE TO GO AND GATHER.** SENIORS DON'T HAVE PLACES REALLY EITHER. **A SPACE THAT FACILITATES EVERYONE** WOULD BE REALLY NICE.

- MANITOULIN BUSINESS OWNER

" I CAN SAY THAT TOURISM IS DEFINITELY GROWING MORE EACH YEAR. **THE GROWTH IN TOURISM IS GOOD**, IT **MEANS MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE ISLANDER'S.**

- MANITOULIN RESIDENT

" THE **DROP IN TOURISM DURING THE WINTER REALLY AFFECTS THE BUSINESSES.** THIS PLAYS A PART IN HOW EXPENSIVE EVERYTHING IS.

- MANITOULIN RESIDENT

" INTRODUCE A SORT OF **COMMUNITY SPACE WHERE PEOPLE CAN GET SHELTER FROM OUTSIDE, SOCIALIZE, AND RELAX** DURING **ANY TIME OF THE YEAR.**

- MANITOULIN RESIDENT

FOUR PILLARS

A set of four pillars were developed, outlining the key objectives that any Manitoulin-specific intervention should seek to accomplish. Achieving each of these pillars would address the framing concepts developed based on all the general rural analyses and exercises. These pillars continue to refine the framing concepts into a state that is more specific to Manitoulin Island. The pillars also allow the framing concepts to connect and capture all previous engagements and interviews as well as the aspect of traditional land use. Lastly, crafting physical objectives provides a means to translate the framing concepts and analyses into spatial guides.

Indigenous Resident

Non-Indigenous Resident

Tourist

Foster relationships through communal space and access

Create Economic activation outside of the summer months

Inspire Environmental stewardship

Acknowledge and educate on Manitoulin's culture and history
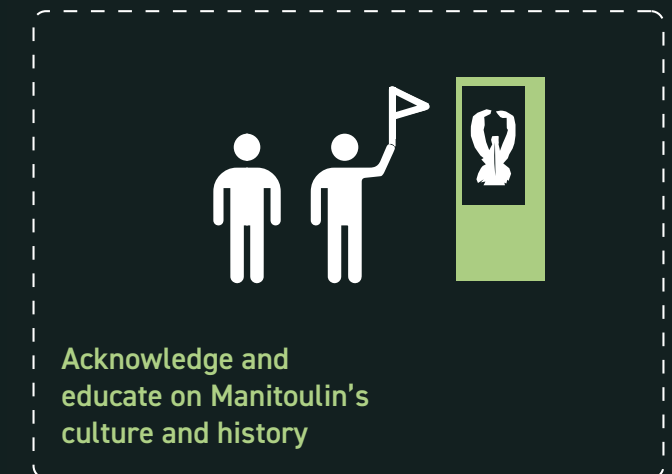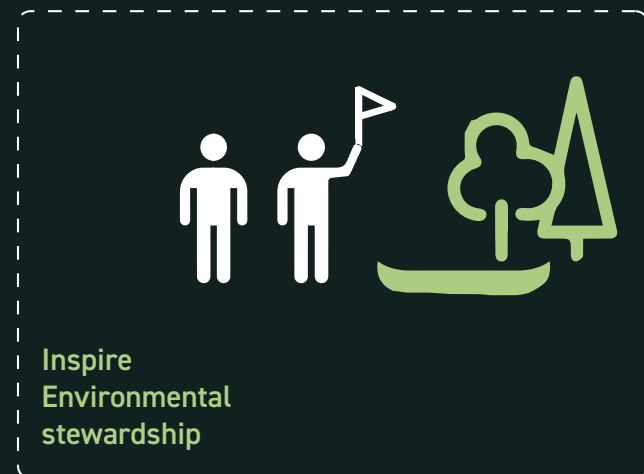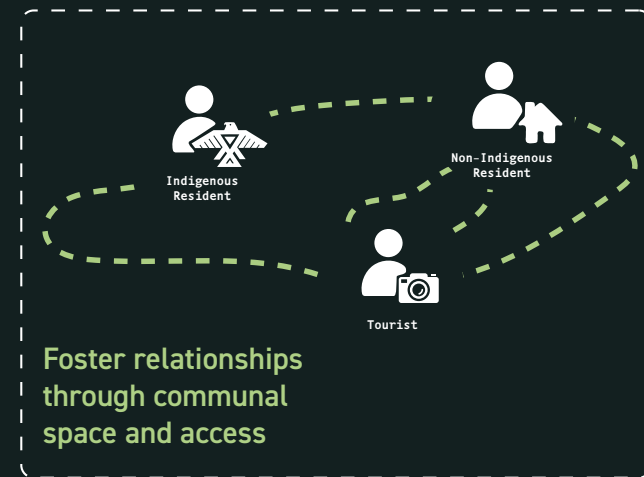
Fig. 3.19, The Four Pillars

01

02

03

04

05

06

IDEA EXPLORATIONS

To begin determining an appropriate intervention for Manitoulin, several design exercises and ideas were explored. The ideas were inspired by the interviews and architectural precedents, which focused on social and environmental sustainability as well as winter programming. The spatial explorations were focused directly on establishing connections between the three groups present on Manitoulin. The first exercise involves the development of small mobile pavilions to create a variety of social programming. The pavilions can be seen through the diagrams on the right. The second spatial concept explored the potential of a large-scale sporting event that would create a network of experiences and collaboration across the entire Island.
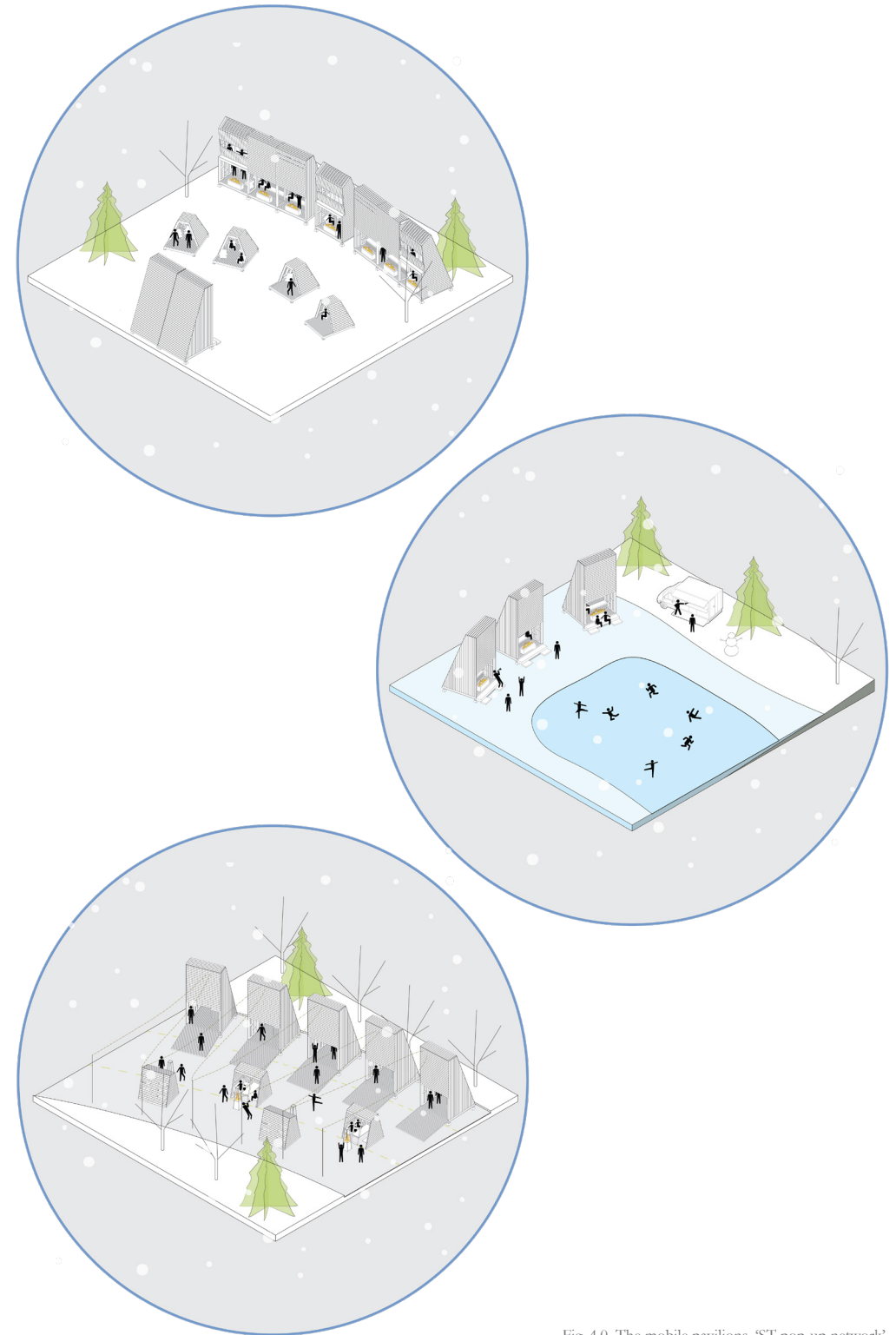
Fig. 4.0, The mobile pavilions, 'ST pop-up network'

THEATRE | MARKET | BAR

FLEXIBLE | BANQUETTE | PICNIC
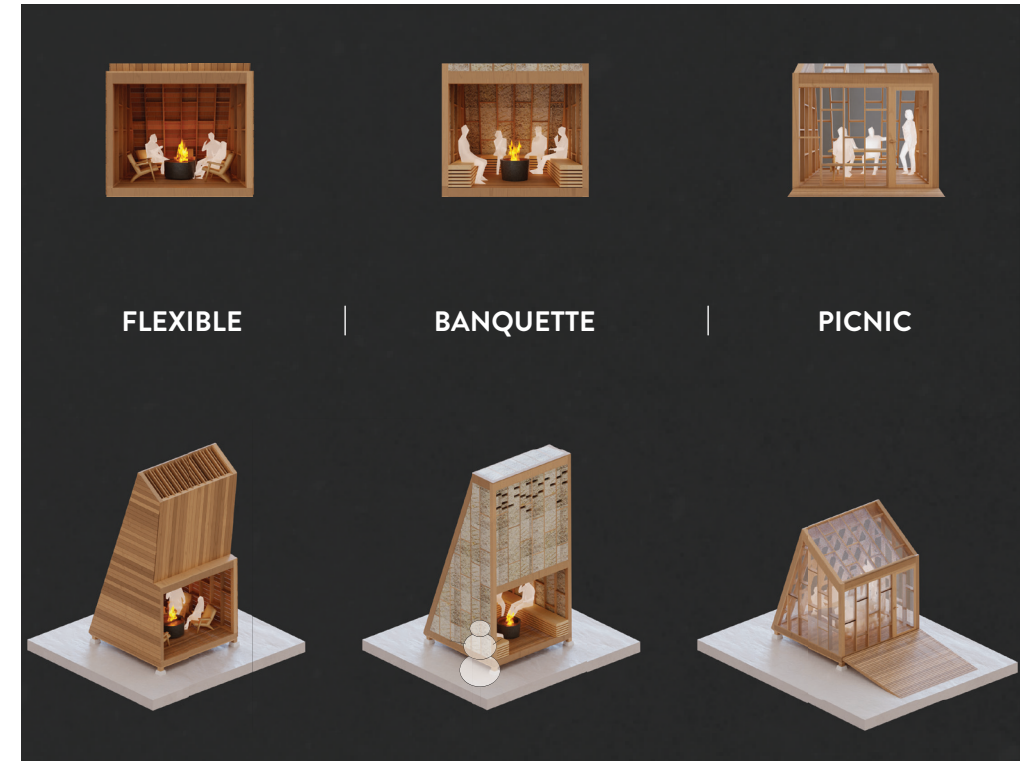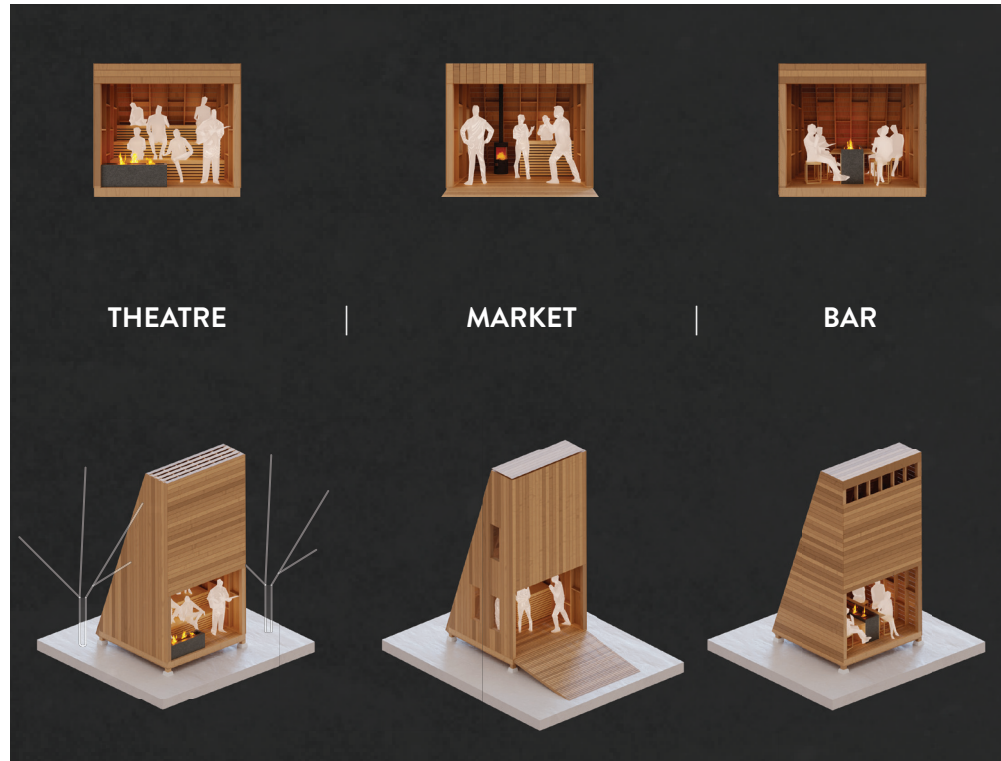
Fig. 4.1, The modular design of the pavilions

ST POP-UP NETWORK

The pop-up pavilions represent a conceptual network of social hubs across Manitoulin Island. The design of these structures supported various programs, and the modular design allowed flexibility depending on the desired use. Their creation also aimed to be the first step in new events and recreational opportunities throughout the entire year.

The concept was inspired by the traditional architecture of Manitoulin. The design of the Wigwam enabled the Anishinaabe people of Manitoulin to traverse the vast Island and move between resources. The design also emulates the Longhouse, facilitating social space within the colder months.

The pavilions promoted greater exploration and accessibility on Manitoulin. They had the potential to create a common space between the two resident groups as well as tourists, but only within the confines of a singular town or community. This resulted in everything still existing isolated and lacking an overall connection across the Island.

Fig. 4.2, Wigwam, Source: The Canadian Encyclopedia

Fig. 4.3, The pavilions supporting a hockey event on Lake Mindemoya

① Little Current

② Wikwemikong

③ Manitowaning

④ South Baymouth

⑤ Cup & Saucer

⑥ M'Chigeeng

⑦ Mindemoya

⑧ Providence Bay

⑨ Kagawong

⑩ Gore Bay

Active

Mercantile

Social

Multiuse
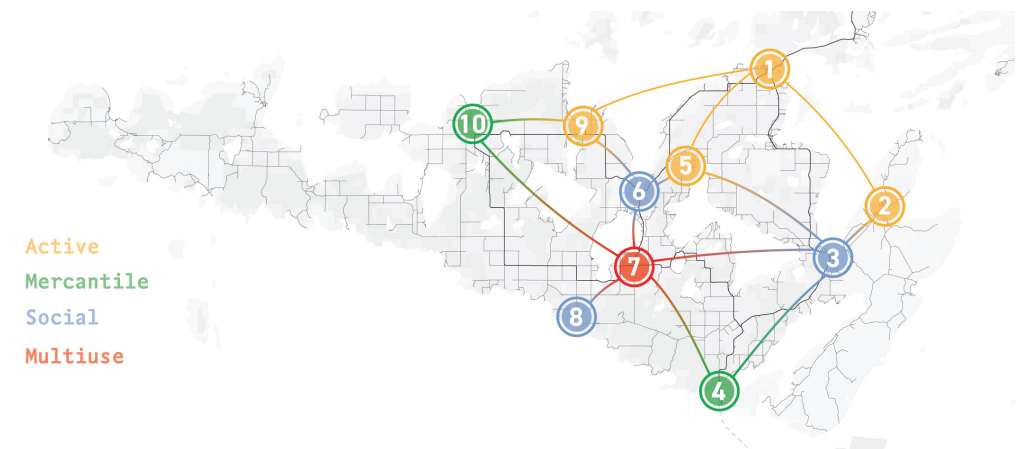
Fig. 4.4, The type of pavilion that would exist in each community

WINTER GAMES

Created alongside fellow thesis candidate, Cameron Case, a website was developed that explores the potential of a large sporting event to activate and connect Manitoulin with a focus on creating collaboration between indigenous and non-indigenous residents as well as tourists. The website presents an online infrastructure in support of the existing Ontario Winter Games to be held on Manitoulin in 2027. An important factor for the project was integrating local resources on the website so visitors can easily acquire information and benefit the local community. This was accomplished through mapping along with consideration of previous interviews with Manitoulin residents.

Fig. 4.5, Snow shoer on Manitoulin, Source: 3 Cows and a Cone

January 11th – January 22nd

WELCOME TO THE MANITOULIN ISLAND 2027 ONTARIO WINTER GAMES

Fig. 4.6, Landing image on the O.W.G. website
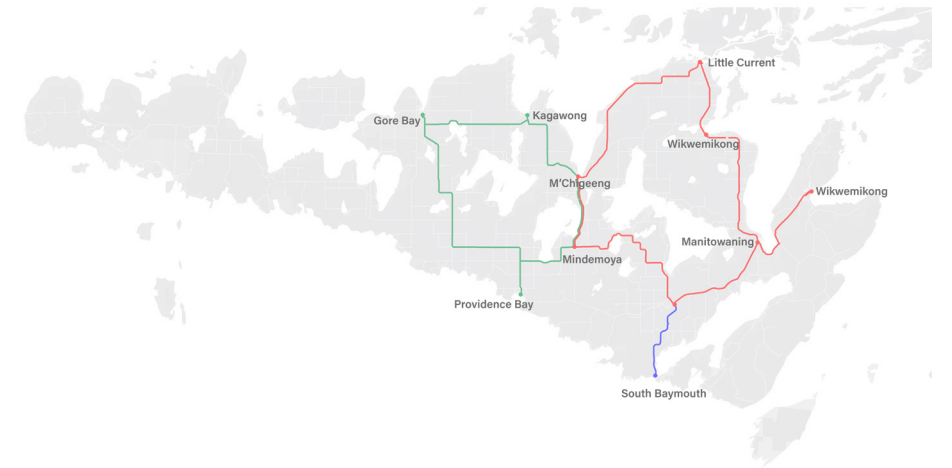
Fig. 4.7, Public transportation route for the games

Fig. 4.8, Location of different sporting events during the games
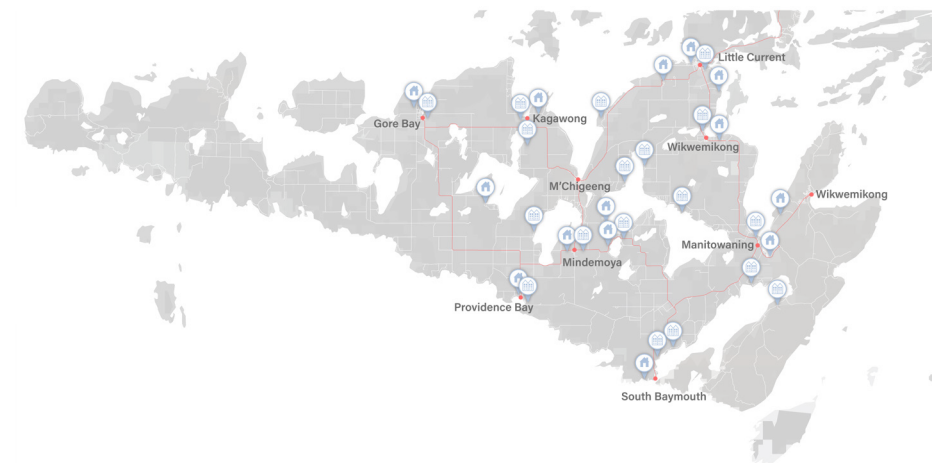
Fig. 4.9, Location of accommodations for athletes and visitors

TIGNISH

CAVENDISH

NEW GLASCOW

SUMMERSIDE

BORDEN-CARLETON

CHARLOTTETOWN

SOURIS

MONTAGUE

MURRAY HARBOUR

PEI ISLAND WALK

To reflect on these spatial explorations and confirm the ideas were related to the four pillars and items highlighted within the public engagement, a second, more in depth, precedent study occurred. These precedents relate to the idea of connectivity facilitated through new physical and communal spaces.

The first analysis is located on Prince Edward Island. A plan was generated that shifts a growing tourist industry into one that not only benefits the community but builds Island wide collaboration. This

would be the creation of the PEI Island Walk, which was a simple trail visitors could travel across a 30-day period.

The Island Walk demonstrated how a simple pedestrian connector could address resident-tourist resentment and inspire tourism outside of the summer months with travellers interested in experiencing the trail across seasons. The response to the Island Walk also demonstrates the interest in this form of long-walk tourism.

Fig. 4.10, The PEI Island Walk route

The Arnold Arboretum is managed through a public-private partnership between the City of Boston Parks and Recreation and Harvard University. This area holds a "museum of trees" educating the world on vegtation.

NATURAL EDUCATION
ARNOLD ARBORETUM

- Hunnewell building - offices, library visitor center, maps seasonal exhibitions, and knowledgeable staff.
- Larz ANderson Bonsai collection - oldeest and smallest trees.
- Explorer's garden - Testing hardiness of new plants from around the world
- Peters Hill - Highest view point

NATURAL RECREATION
JAMAICA POND

- Pinebank Promontory - granite outline shows old mansions. Views of pond and breezes through tall pines
- Memorial
- Boathouse/bandstand - visitors can rent sailboats or rowboats and bandstand offers recreational,educational and cultural activities

NATURAL RECREATION
OLMSTED PARK

- Leverett Pond - with islands for visual interest and waterfowl breeding
- Overlook
- Field - sports take place
- Wildflower Meadow - converted ice rink offers habitat for butterflies bees and pollinators
- Ward's Pond - Glacial kettle-hole formed at the last ice age. Quiet wilderness to isolate

TRANSITIONAL
RIVERWAY

- Bellevye Street Bridge
- Chapel Street Bridge Area
- Round House Shelter

FORMAL or CIVILIZED
BACK BAY FENS

- Outdoor Athletic Facilities
- Rose Garden
- War memorials
- Japanese Bell
- Visitor center
- WWII Gardens
- Boylston Bridge

FORMAL or CIVILIZED
COMMONWEALTH AVENUE MALL

- Long green corridor
- Several Honorary Statues
- Women's Memorial

NATURAL + RECREATION
FRANKLIN PARK

- Pond
- 99 steps + Ellicott arch
- Wilderness - 65-acre native oak forest with meandering paths
- Schoolmaster hill - hidden area for picnics
- Golf Course
- Park Zoo
- Playstead - large sports area
- Shelter ruins overlook - olmstead designed

EMERALD NECKLACE

The second study focuses on the Emerald Necklace, a 7-mile-long network of parks in Boston, Massachusetts, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted in the late 1800s.

The park creates a balance and shift of formal and informal areas as you travel through the city and transition from more urban to natural parks. The collection is an illustration of social possibilities that include both educational and recreational elements incorporated into the network. The parks offer opportunities for historical and ecological education, as well as general social spaces such as water access and a golf course.

FORMAL or CIVILIZED
PUBLIC GARDEN + BOSTON COMMON

- 9/11 Memorial
- Thomas Ball sculpture
- Swan boats for rent
- Duckling sculptures
- Soldier memorials and monuments
- Playground and pond - skating & Wading
- Fountain
- Visitors center and start of Freedom Trail

Fig. 4.11, A figure-ground of the Emerald Gardens outlining the variety of environments

MANITOULIN PATH NETWORK

The two previous studies influenced the proposed intervention for Manitoulin Island, which is a network of paths that connect communities to one another and to Manitoulin's environment, history, culture and people. The PEI Island Walk illustrates this concept's ability to support beneficial and conscious tourism. The Island Walk also displays the ability to capture many aspects explored through this thesis, such as the overall disconnections, degradation of accessibility, lack of social opportunities and year-round activation for both resident recreation and economic sustainability.

The program and fluctuating design of the Emerald Necklace prompted further development of architectural elements which provide more than social spaces but education and immersion into Manitoulin.

Above all else, a path network on Manitoulin has the potential to build a communal experience that would not only connect the separated communities but also connect the visitors with Manitoulin through a common objective of not only experiencing the island but learning from it. This network could also expand opportunities for residents, providing them with new events and recreation programs such as the idea of the Ontario Winter Games.

Fig. 4.13, The Manitou Miikana system

THE MANITOULIN PATH NETWORK ASPIRES TO **UNITE LOCAL COMMUNITIES** BY INTRODUCING NEW COMMUNAL **MOBILITY AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES.** PATH PROGRAMMING WILL ENCOURAGE **WIDER SOCIALIZATION** AND SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES BY PROMOTING TOURISM AND ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH EXPANDED **EXPLORATION, ACTIVITIES, AND EDUCATION.**

Image on the left: Fig. 4.14, A trail on Manitoulin Island

The design of the path network was devised through the Three-Scale Framework. This framework is a response to the overall size of Manitoulin Island as well as the distinct groups of occupants and their related histories. To address the earlier challenges, needs, desires, and pillars, the approach of the thesis focuses on three interconnected levels, all of which are encompassed by the overarching concept of the network.

The first scale is concerned with the overall Island and aims to create a cohesive response that connects communities and tourists through new mobility and communal spaces.

The second scale transitions to the community or town scale and explores the needs and opportunities within these specific and distinct areas.

The final scale is focused on the individual or personal level. This scale provides the path network with an identity rooted in the existing sense of place.

Trail Design

Design Approach
Positive and negative control points are studied through the area of interest
Positive control points: existing trails/paths, anchor points (crossings, large tree/rock formation), points of interest (lakes, scenic views, farms)
Negative control points: Hazards, private property, environmentally sensitive areas
This provides a rough idea of where the trail should go

User Types

Who Will Use This?
Active Resident
Looking to use the trail as a means of long distance exercise, mobility as well as a social space
Active Visitor
Looking to immerse in the culture and environmental exploration through activities and adventure
Passive Nature Observer
Includes slower moving spectators more focused on the environment
Family & elderly
This group is looking for scenic and social opportunities at a calm pace

Experiences

Impact
What does the designer want the individual to experience? How will people react on this trail? The designer must consider the unexpected moments of beauty. The quick change in view when changing environments/contexts or The different qualities across the seasons. You get different impressions on the location depending on where you go. For this reason, options are important.

Greenway Design

Community Oriented
The greenway creates recommendations for land uses, way finding, and organization. Planning begins with the consideration of access points, connections to destinations and linkages to existing trails. It should identify the best pedestrian and bicycle practices and routes. Beyond this, it should work into the existing strategies Most importantly, the proposal must reflect the needs and desires of the local communities through which is passes.

Material Consideration

Hard & Soft
Hard - Running, Biking...
· Crushed stone - popular as it holds up well.
· Resin-Based Stabilized Material - naturally sensitive and can be cheaper to asphalt
· Boardwalk - Used over wetlands
Soft - Meandering, Hiking...
· Natural Earth - Inexpensive and can be maintained by volunteers
· Wood Chips - Can work well as a parallel tread for runners. Decomposes rapidly but maintenance can be performed by volunteers.

Landscape Typologies

Types of Paths
Town (urban)
Involves shared street paths and biking lanes
Community Connections (Rural)
Involves a clear connection between communities and provides an alternative mode of mobility. These connections should be accessible for all user groups
Natural
Involves a more immersive experience in the natural environment while still providing a way of mobility. This trail type will reflect the environment and in doing so, open it up to slower methods of travel such as walking and hiking.
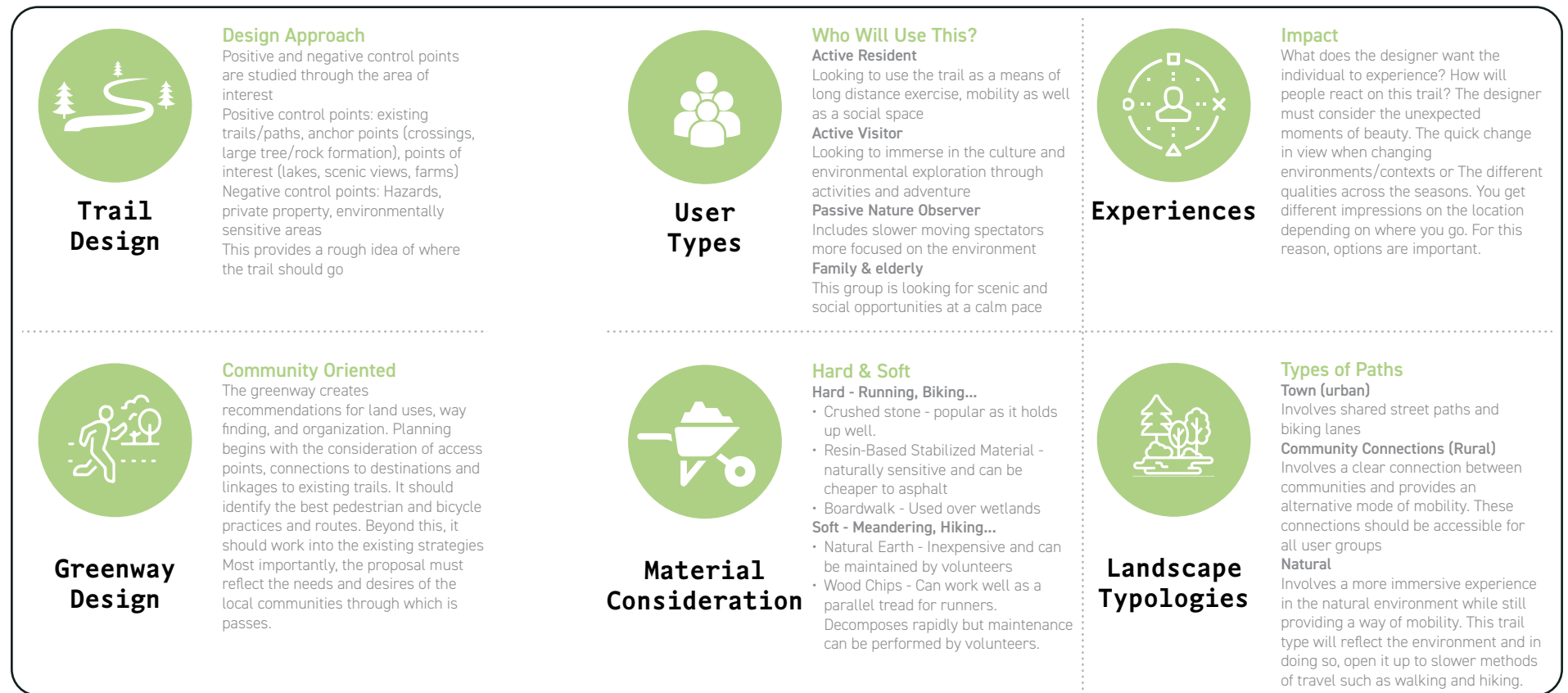
Fig. 4.15, Island Scale: Design Framework, Data based on: Joe Louis Greenway, Ontario Trail Guidelines

SCALE 01

The first scale addresses Manitoulin at the Island scale, looking to unify and connect communities through a tourism experience rooted in the Island's history and culture. This scale holds an overarching design strategy for the path system. This was developed through the analysis of trail design guidelines and several greenway precedent projects.
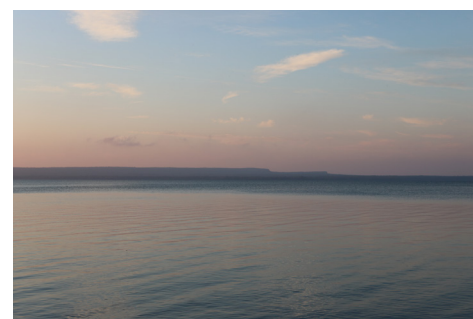
Fig. 4.16, Island Scale

Fig. 4.17, Community Scale

Fig. 4.18, Individual Scale

Fig. 4.19, Community Scale: Program matrix, Data based on previous precedent projects

SCALE 02

The second scale explores potential programs at the community level and examines what these program can provide that will assist the ecosystem of the path network and existing communities.

This is accomplished through a matrix that cross-references programs from precedent projects with elements that address certain needed aspects.

Design Approach

Prototypical
The observation towers and smaller pavilions are prototypical and serve as support for rest or way-finding.
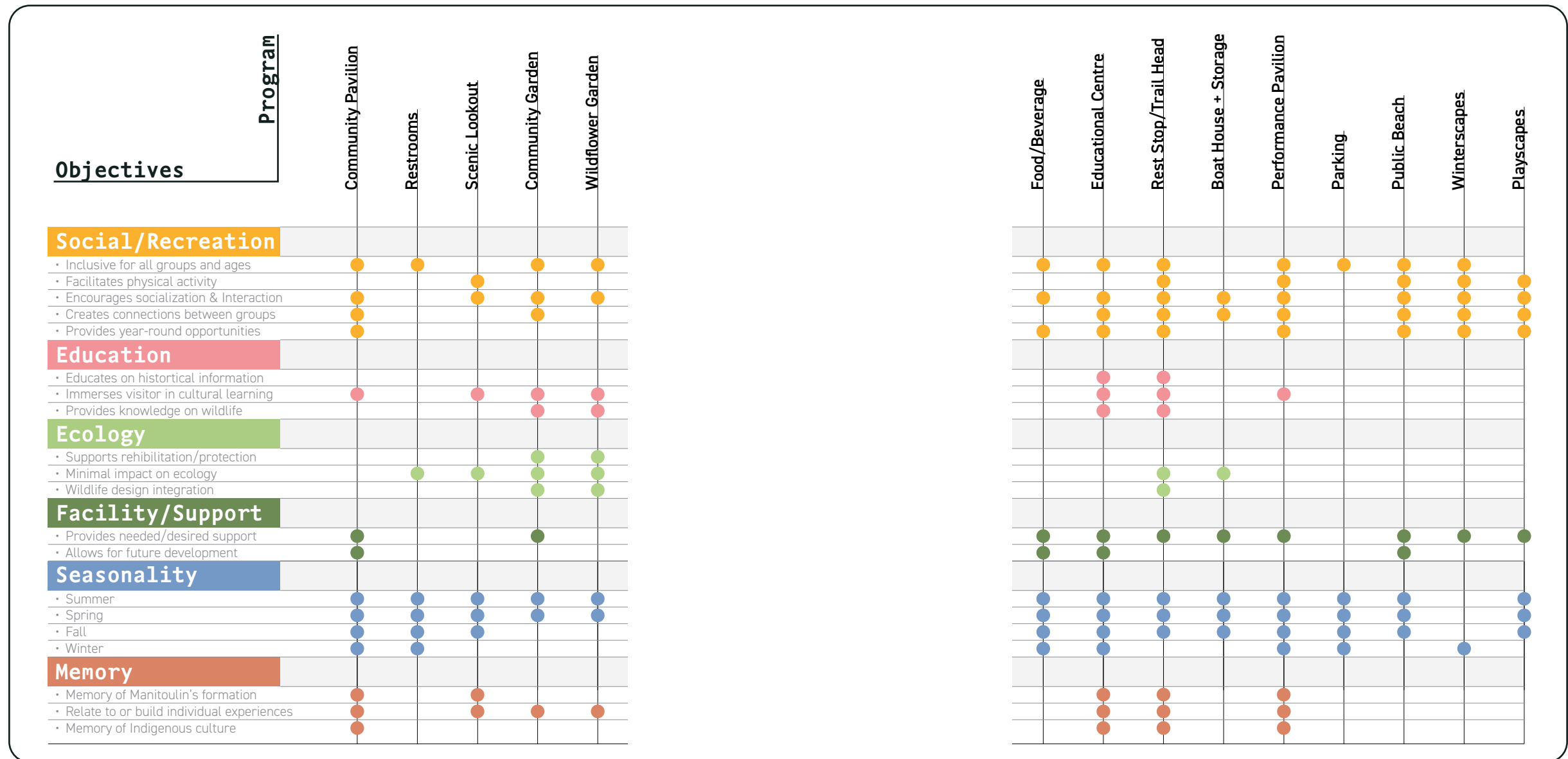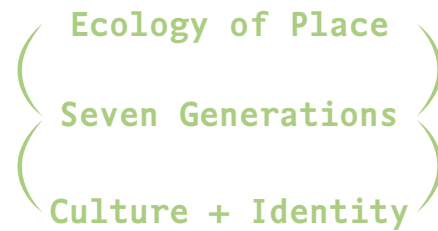
Contextual
Two structures have been developed that address context through desires/needs/issues, materiality and form.

Hybrid
Way-finding elements and pavilions are hybrid, with designs pertaining to certain conditions.
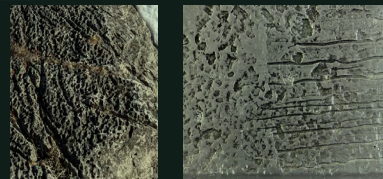
Placeknowing

■ It is when a place is not just established to attract people, but developed around social and societal interests. The goal of placeknowing is based on the value of preserving local customs by promoting communal participation and absorption of these traditions/beliefs.

Ecology of Place

Seven Generations

Culture + Identity

Rock landscape in South Baymouth and tonbasil metal

Environment
Materials were selected which emulate the philosophy of the art on Manitoulin and therefore connect with the natural environment. For sustainability, it was important to selected materials that could be sourced locally.

Historical Woodland Art style + Contemporary Indigenous artist from Manitoulin

Historical Art
A common theme within the Anishnaabe art style, Woodland Art, is the x-ray technique. The x-ray represents the inner structures of both humans and animals and provide a look into their spiritual and emotional lives.
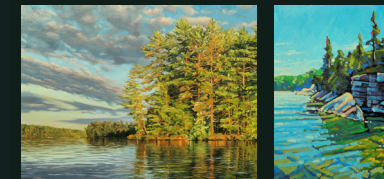
Manitoulin Island artists

Contemporary Art
The Group of Seven have significantly inspired the style and philosophy of art on Manitoulin Island. The Group of Seven established a Canadian art movement through direct contact with the country's vast and unique landscape.

Fig. 4.20, Individual Scale: Placeknowing applied to design, Data based on Placeknowing principles

SCALE 03

The final scale focuses on the individual level and is based on one of the framing concepts, placeknowing. The goal of placeknowing is based on the value of preserving local customs by promoting communal participation and absorption of the place's communities and culture. A strategy of contextual designs was developed to connect residents and tourists with the Island through intimate experiences.

PHASES

The layout of the path began by setting parameters, which eventually became three phases. The red border and green line represent the first phase and the focus of this thesis proposal. Firstly, this area was selected because it establishes a link between the two entry points of the Island, which is by ferry in the south and by bridge in the north. This selection also encompasses the three main towns, Mindemoya, Little Current, and South Baymouth, as well as the major Ojibwe community of M'chigeeng.

The second phase is represented by the blue line. This phase closes the loop around the largest inland lake, Lake Manitou, and provides access to the eastern coast. This phase connects with the easternmost communities, including access to the unceded territory of Wikwemikong.

The third phase is represented by the red line. The final phase connects with the largely undisturbed West. This phase creates a holistic link to the smaller communities and entices travellers to complete the ultimate pilgrimage around Manitoulin Island.
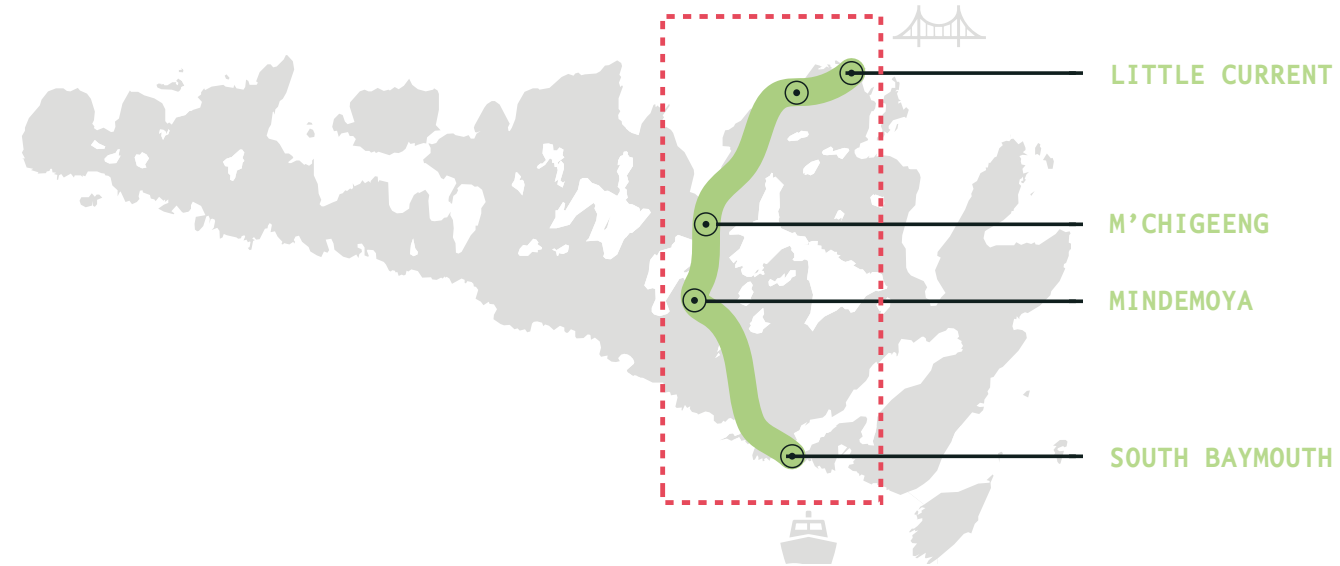
LITTLE CURRENT

M'CHIGEENG

MINDEMOYA

SOUTH BAYMOUTH

Fig. 4.21, The first phase (green)

Fig. 4.22, The second phase on the right (blue) and the third phase on the left (red)

MANITOULIN TYPOLOGIES

Manitoulin Island offers a diverse range of environments, including forests, wetlands, rocky shores, and agricultural areas. Due to the variety of environments, the path network passing through Manitoulin Island requires different types of strategies to ensure safe and comfortable travel.

For instance, in forested areas, the pathway system will require well-marked areas to prevent travelers from getting lost. Additionally, the path may need to be widened in some areas to allow for multiple users or to accommodate those with different modes of travel.

In wetlands, boardwalks or elevated paths may need to be constructed to allow for safe passage over marshy terrain without damaging the delicate ecosystem. In rock-based shores, steps and handrails may need to be installed to ensure that travelers can navigate the rugged terrain safely. In agricultural areas, the pathway system may be designed to highlight local farms and produce. This could include signage, interpretive displays, or special events that showcase the region's unique agricultural products.

TRAIL GUIDELINES

The Ontario trail guidelines document was utilized to determine how the trail should progress through the island as well as where certain facilities and rest points need to be located. The average person walks 5 miles in about an hour and 30 minutes.

In order to maximize the environmental sustainability of a trail, amenities and facilities that provide users with access to drinking water, toilets, and garbage disposals should be provided at the beginning of the trail. Drinking water, toilets, and garbage disposal facilities should be provided at intervals 2 hours apart if need be (Trails for All Ontarians Collaborative, 2006). Rest areas are important because they provide trail users of all ages and skill levels the opportunity to relax and enjoy the environment. Rest areas should be provided at 30-minute intervals.

Lakeside

Forest

Meadow

Wetland

Fig. 4.23, Sections through a variety of Manitoulin's environments

TRANSECTS

The transects connect with the first scale, of the Three-Scale Framework and are based on the same trail guidelines. Two main profiles were created through Manitoulin that affect the final layout of the proposal. The first is the accessible transect, and the second is the adventure transect. The accessible transect follows slope guidelines for biking and an easier walking experience, while the adventure transect is more traditional with varying topography.

ACCESSIBLE TRANSECT

Trail guidelines for accessibility, cycling, equestrian, cross country skiing and snow shoeing:

- The incline for cyclists should ideally not exceed 6%, with short sections of up to 10% being possibly acceptable.
- Equestrian routes should have a maximum grade of 20% to ensure the safety and comfort of horses and their riders.
- Cross-country ski trails should maintain a slope gradient of no more than 20%, with only a few short exceptions.

ADVENTURE TRANSECT

Traditional hiking trail guidelines:

- Hiking trails are best designed with slopes that range between 3% to 10%, as they provide a comfortable gradient for hikers while also minimizing erosion.
- Trails should have a running slope no steeper than 1:12 (8.33%) for more than 30% of their total length.
- The slope gradient of any section of a trail must not exceed 1:8 (12%) to ensure safe and accessible passage.

ACCESSIBLE TRANSECT

Avg. Slope: 1.2%   **Max. Slope:6.5%**
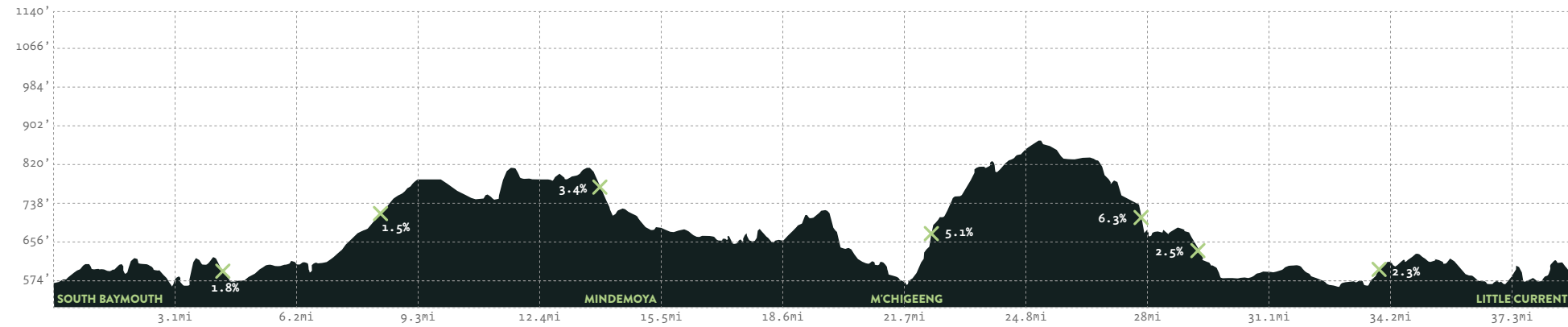
Fig. 4.24, Accessible Transect

ADVENTURE TRANSECT

Avg. Slope: 1.8%   **Max. Slope: 12.7%**
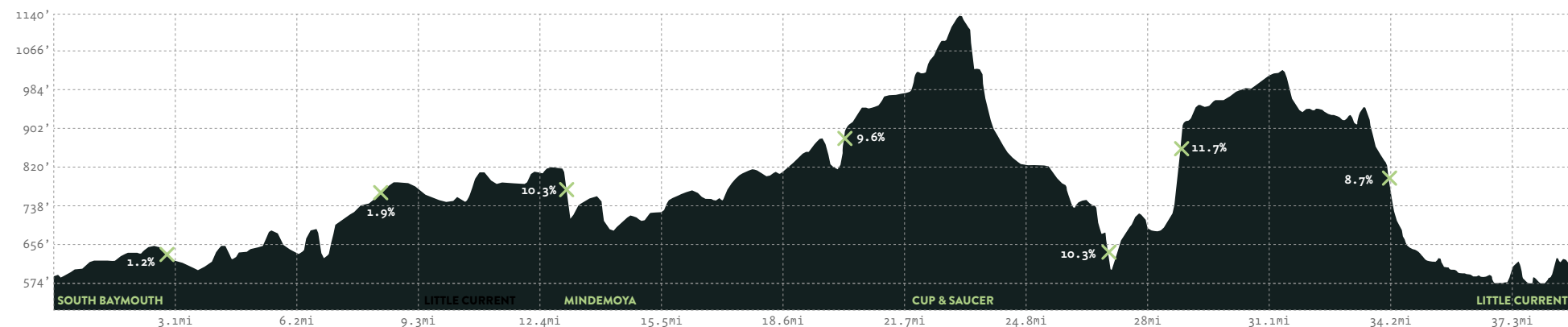
Fig. 4.25, Adventure Transect

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Developed through on-site, photo, and satellite analysis, the Existing Conditions map coincides with the first scale of the Three-Scale Framework. The map outlines urban nodes, points of interest, elevation data, existing trails, accommodation areas and streams. Points of interest include lake access points, unique natural features, unused side roads and trails, lookout areas, and mobility interchanges. Overall, the map assists in planning the path network by highlighting areas to connect to and experiences to create.

The Existing Conditions map is a critical step in organizing how the organization of the network will operate. For example, the delineation of existing trails opens up these elements to merge with the new paths. Doing this promotes the use of established trail systems and avoids unnecessary alteration of the environment by using what already exists. Highlighting areas of accommodation suggest areas for the path to connect with. This would allow visitors who wish to complete the entire journey places to stay. At the same time, this benefits the local businesses providing these accommodation services.

Map on the right: Fig. 4.26, Existing conditions on Manitoulin

Lake Mindemoya

Closed Road

Farms

Side Road

Stream

Lake Access

Farms

Side Road

Farms

Martin Lake
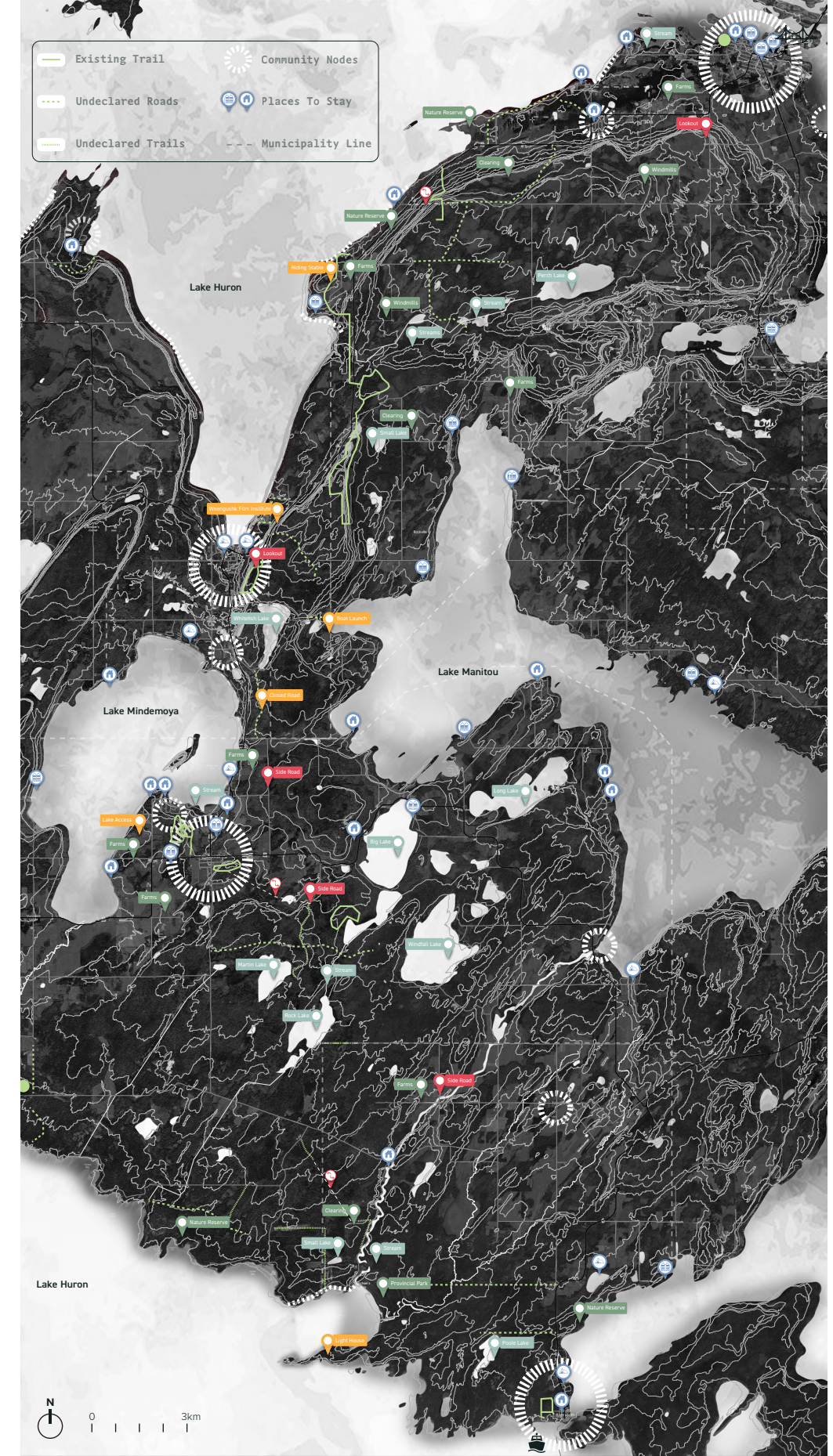
ENLARGED EXISTING CONDITIONS

The enlarged section of the map narrows in on the town of Mindemoya. The existing trails and roads are represented by the green lines, with points of interest represented by the variety of iconography.

Fig. 4.27, Enlarged Existing Conditions map
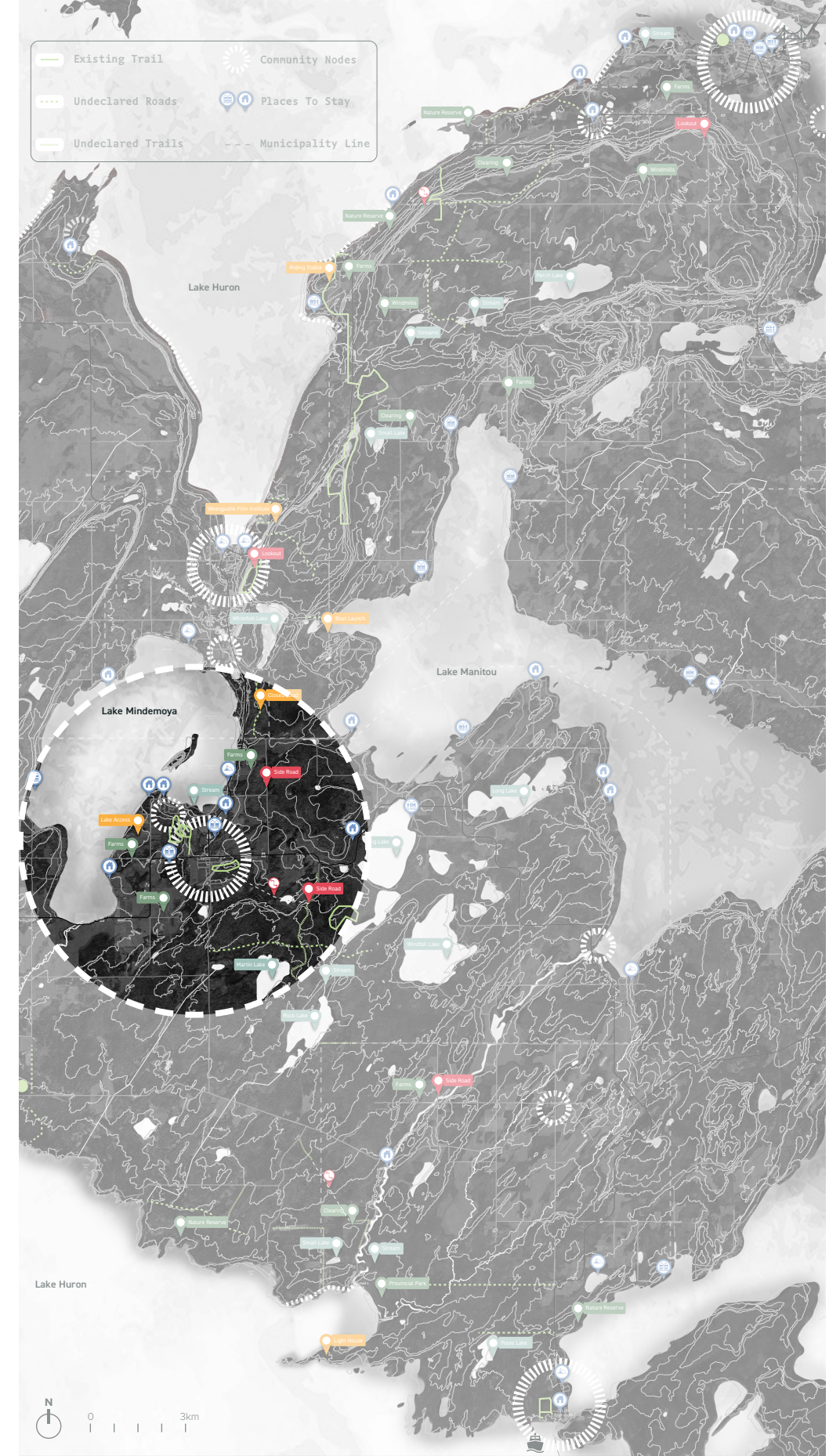
Existing Trail   Community Nodes
Undeclared Roads   Places To Stay
Undeclared Trails   --- Municipality Line

Lake Huron

Lake Mindemoya

Lake Manitou

Lake Huron

N   0   3km

DESIGN PROPOSAL

Manitou Miikana, the new path network on Manitoulin Island, is illustrated on the right of this page. The proposal is informed by all previous analyses and explorations, culminating into one cohesive and rooted design gesture that becomes a catalyst for communal engagement on Manitoulin Island. The implementation of the path is inspired by Scandinavian 'right of public access" policies to challenge the privatization that exists across Manitoulin, permitting traditional land use practices. To further address both historical and contemporary resident challenges as well as tourism-related issues, various supporting architectural elements were developed. These include wayfinding pieces, pavilions and communal structures.

Image on the right: Fig. 5.0, The Manitou Miikana system displayed on tombasil

SPATIALIZED PROGRAM MAP

The Spatialized Program Map is connected with the Community Scale from the Three-scale Framework. That scale explores potential program through a spatial matrix. The map connects those programmatic ideas with important quotes and considerations from the public engagement reports and the conducted 1-on1 interviews. The map reveals areas for architectural development to address social, educational, ecological, historical and seasonal aspects. Consideration of areas which should be undisturbed was part of this spatial exercise as well.

For example, areas concerned with ecology are determined by locating parks, nature reserves or unique conditions. A quote on the bottom expresses the desire for tourism products that promote and preserve nature, and for this reason, the trail has been connected to this unique coastal environment which is comprised of the Alvar coast and sand dunes.

PHASE 01

Fig. 5.1, Diagram illustrating phase 01

Social/Recreation
The need for social or recreational spaces was based upon interviews of where social spaces were deemed as needed. This also relates to the general idea of providing communal social space for all.

Education
Education areas were determined by locating zones where their would be strong crossovers between indigenous and non-indigenous residents.

Ecology
Ecological areas were determined by locating provincial parks, nature reserves, and unique conditions found while traversing the Island. Part of this is knowing when to leave undisturbed

Facility/Support
The location support areas are needed is based upon the Ontario hiking guidelines. This also includes areas on the path that are far from and urban area and call for greater support.

Memory
Memory was inspired by the concept of Placeknowing (and Claudia). Memory refers to a reference in time, throughout the trail you will acquire different references, learning about Manitoulin as you travel.

Seasonality
Relating to Social/Recreation spaces, Seasonality relates to either resident desire for winter recreation or local businesses seeking economical activation. These areas were determined through interviews.

Fig. 5.2, The Spatialized Program map (right) and the corresponding legend (top)

PHASE 01 DESIGN

Phase 01 travels through the most integral section of Manitoulin Island. The first phase focuses on connecting the two points of access to Manitoulin, the Chi-Cheemaun ferry in South Baymouth and by swing bridge in Little Current. This phase also traverses through the heart of the Island, intersecting with four major towns, including two indigenous communities.
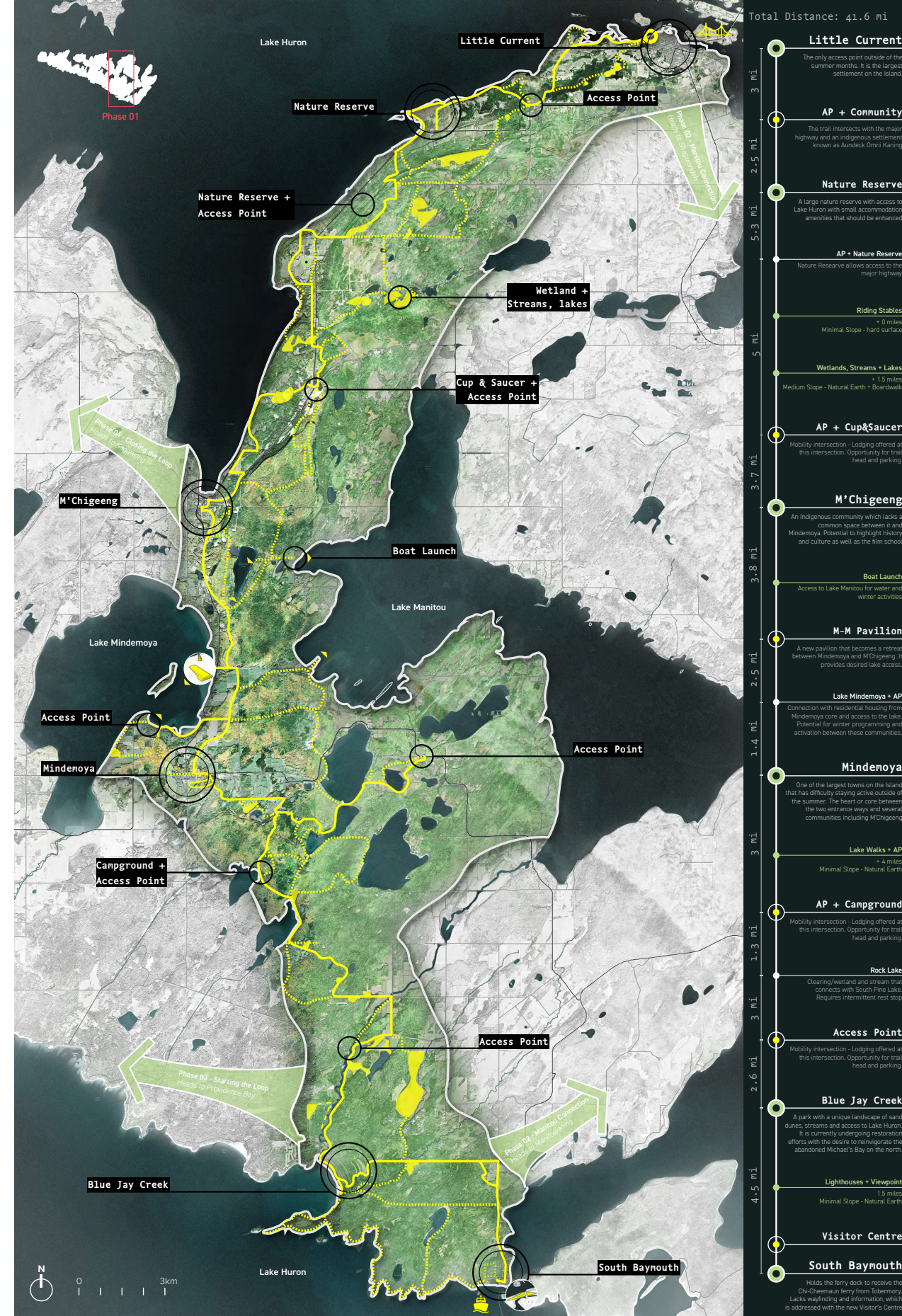
The path is designed based on the Existing Conditions map, which highlights points of interest, existing trails and other mobility options to connect with, such as vehicular and water-based mobility options. The transects establish a variety of modes of travel and affect the final layout of the paths. The solid yellow line on the map represents the accessible route that is appropriate for easy access and biking as well as winter modes of travel such as snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. The dashed yellow lines become sections for adventure hiking but also act as smaller loops for people to take part in. The timeline beside the map explains the entire trip, providing details on significant points of interest.

The connection across Manitoulin provides residents and tourists with the opportunity to build relationships while being immersed in the varied natural and urban environments. In turn, this promotes education and exposure to these areas through exploration and interactions along their journey. Concurrently it becomes a new direction in general for tourism through the creation of this overall experience that allows deeper exchanges between people and the Island itself.

PHASE 01

Fig. 5.3, Diagram illustrating phase 01

Image on the right: Fig. 5.4, Design of phase 01 with the path timeline detailing points of interest

Total Distance: 41.6 mi

Little Current
The only access point outside of the summer months. It is the largest settlement on the Island.

3 mi

AP + Community
The trail intersects with the major highway and an indigenous settlement known as Aundeck Omni Kaning.

2.5 mi

Nature Reserve
A large nature reserve with access to Lake Huron with small accommodation amenities that should be enhanced.

5.3 mi

AP + Nature Reserve
Nature Reserve allows access to the major highway.

Riding Stables
+ 0 miles
Minimal Slope - Hard surface.

5 mi

Wetlands, Streams + Lakes
+ 1.5 miles
Medium Slope - Natural Earth + Boardwalk

AP + Cup&Saucer
Mobility intersection - Lodging offered at this intersection. Opportunity for trail head and parking.

3.7 mi

M'Chigeeng
An Indigenous community which lacks a common space between it and Mindemoya. Potential to highlight history and culture as well as the film school.

3.8 mi

Boat Launch
Access to Lake Manitou for water and winter activities.

M-M Pavilion
A new pavilion that becomes a retreat between Mindemoya and M'Chigeeng. It provides desired lake access.

2.5 mi

Lake Mindemoya + AP
Connection with residential housing from Mindemoya core and access to the lake. Potential for winter programming and activation between these communities.

1.4 mi

Mindemoya
One of the largest towns on the Island that has difficulty staying active outside of the summer. The heart or core between the two entrance ways and several communities including M'Chigeeng.

Lake Walks + AP
+ 4 miles
Minimal Slope - Natural Earth

3 mi

AP + Campground
Mobility intersection - Lodging offered at this intersection. Opportunity for trail head and parking.

1.3 mi

Rock Lake
Clearing/wetland and stream that connects with South Pine Lake. Requires intermittent rest stop

3 mi

Access Point
Mobility intersection - Lodging offered at this intersection. Opportunity for trail head and parking.

2.6 mi

Blue Jay Creek
A park with a unique landscape of sand dunes, streams and access to Lake Huron. It is currently undergoing restoration efforts with the desire to reinvigorate the abandoned Michael's Bay on the north.

Lighthouses + Viewpoint
1.5 miles
Minimal Slope - Natural Earth

4.5 mi

Visitor Centre

South Baymouth
Holds the ferry dock to receive the Chi-Cheemaun ferry from Tobermory. Lacks wayfinding and information, which is addressed with the new Visitor's Centre.

Map labels:
Lake Huron
Phase 01
Little Current
Nature Reserve
Access Point
Nature Reserve + Access Point
Wetland + Streams, lakes
Cup & Saucer + Access Point
M'Chigeeng
Boat Launch
Lake Manitou
Lake Mindemoya
Access Point
Access Point
Mindemoya
Campground + Access Point
Access Point
Blue Jay Creek
South Baymouth
Lake Huron

N
0   3km

CONNECTIONS + ACCESS

The Mobility map further emphasizes the different path typologies within the first phase. Rather than a singular path, secondary loops and branches are created to form peripheral linkages and varied experiences. These loops also permit transition to points of interest outside of the main system. The map also highlights the available parking areas where individuals who are completing day hikes can access the path network.

The Current & New Access map demonstrates the significantly increased accessibility and connection points the network provides. The red circles represent the limited existing public space. It is currently difficult to navigate towards these public spaces. Manitou Miikana not only supports wider access but merges with these existing spaces as well.

The final map, Stitching The Existing, demonstrates the potential of the Manitou Miikana system in linking adjacent points of interest that are not currently connected. The network also enables travelers to visit underserved or commonly missed areas.

Current & New Access

— Accessible Path
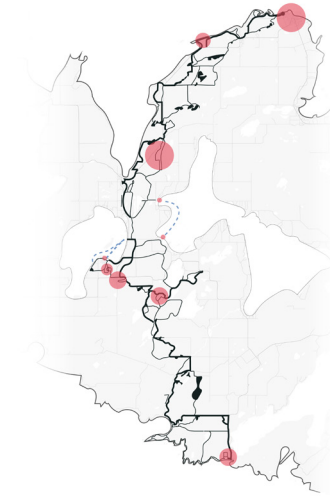— Adventure Paths
● Public Spaces, Trails, Lakes

Fig. 5.5, Current and new access

Stitching The Existing

— Path Network
● Communities + POI Nodes
◌ Stitching By Paths
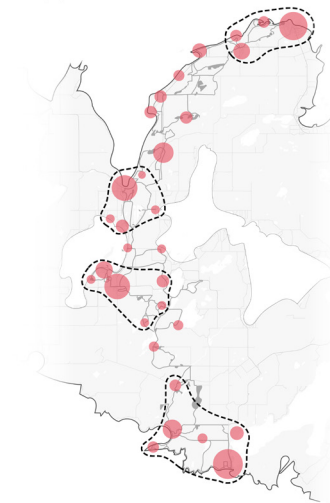

Fig. 5.6, New connections formed by the Manitou Miikana system

Image on the right: Fig. 5.7, Mobility connections and path access points

◉ Trail Access
🄿 Parking
⬤ Urban Nodes
▦ Residential Areas

🚢 South Baymouth Entrance
⛩ Little Current Entrance
⋀ Places To Stay
◌ 1 Hour Walk Radius

Little Current

M'Chigeeng

Lake Manitou

Lake Mindemoya

Mindemoya

Lake Huron

South Baymouth

— Biking, Snowshoeing, Skiing
— Hiking, Running
--- Canoeing, Kayaking, Skating
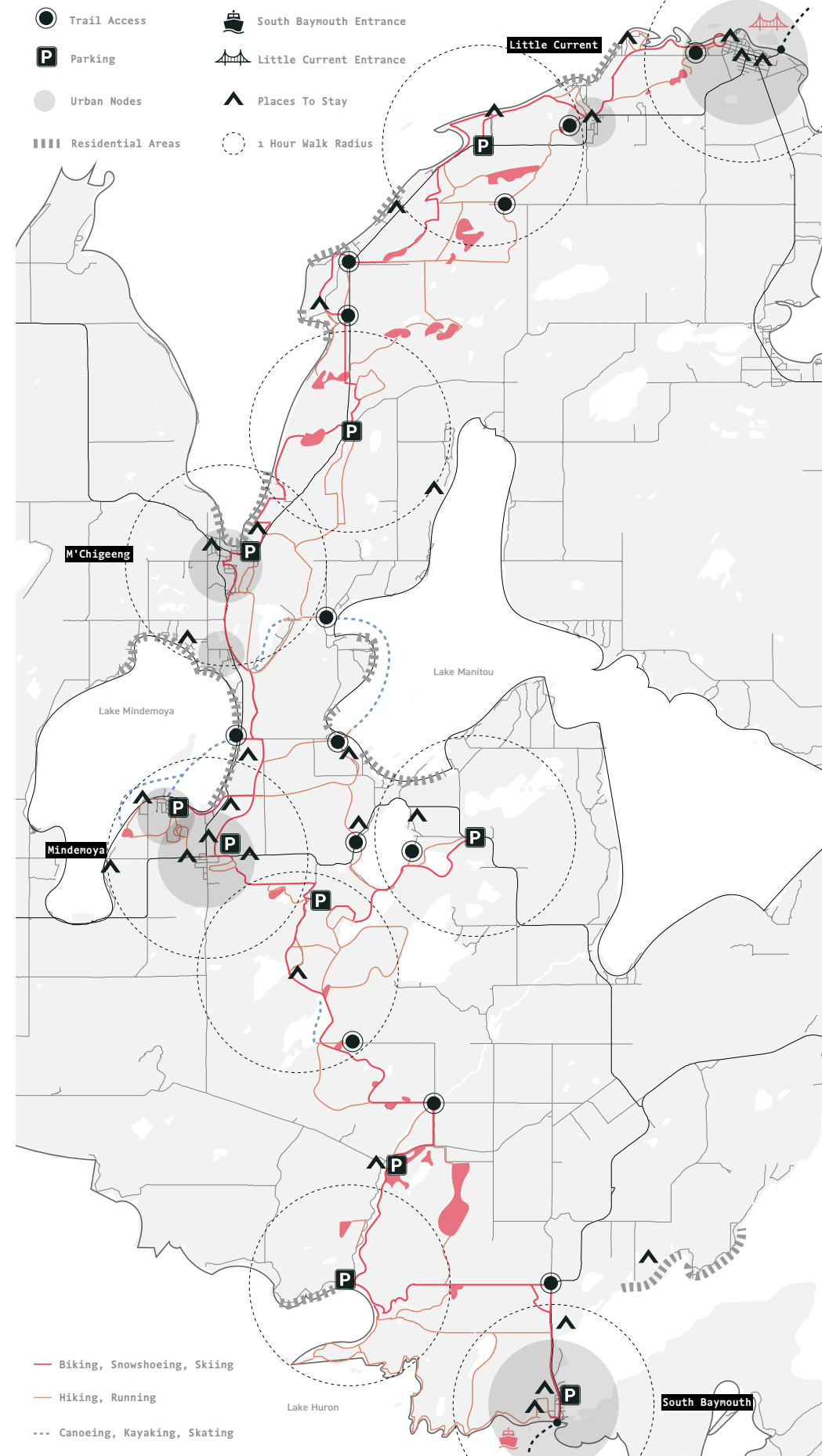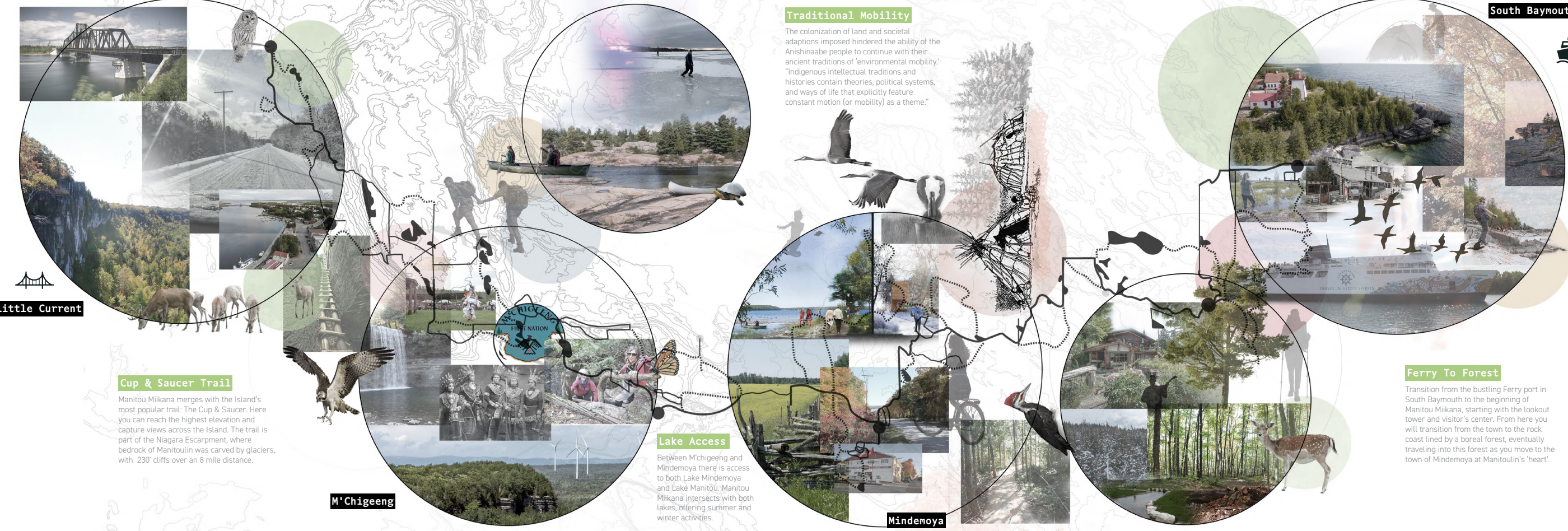
Traditional Mobility

The colonization of land and societal adaptions imposed hindered the ability of the Anishinaabe people to continue with their ancient traditions of 'environmental mobility.' "Indigenous intellectual traditions and histories contain theories, political systems, and ways of life that explicitly feature constant motion (or mobility) as a theme."

Little Current

Cup & Saucer Trail

Manitou Miikana merges with the Island's most popular trail: The Cup & Saucer. Here you can reach the highest elevation and capture views across the Island. The trail is part of the Niagara Escarpment, where bedrock of Manitoulin was carved by glaciers; with 230' cliffs over an 8 mile distance.

M'Chigeeng

Lake Access

Between M'chigeeng and Mindemoya there is access to both Lake Mindemoya and Lake Manitou. Manitou Miikana intersects with both lakes, offering summer and winter activities.

Mindemoya

Ferry To Forest

Transition from the bustling Ferry port in South Baymouth to the beginning of Manitou Miikana, starting with the lookout tower and visitor's center. From here you will transition from the town to the rock coast lined by a boreal forest, eventually traveling into this forest as you move to the town of Mindemoya at Manitoulin's 'heart'.

Fig. 5.8, Experiences along the Manitou Miikana system

EXPERIENCE

The design of the Experiences map supplements the previous quantitative mappings of the proposal. Through photography and collage techniques, this map illustrates the variety of environments and activities along the Manitou Miikana system. Highlighted within the map are important aspects captured by this proposal, such as the connection to traditional mobility and different mobility interchanges.

WAYFINDING

The first architectural pieces to support the Manitou Miikana system are the wayfinding elements. These wayfinding elements are spread across the path network to guide travelers. Although they are not only agents of guidance but also tell the story of Manitoulin Island. The objects within the wayfinding elements are an x-ray view into the anthropological, historical, biological, and archaeological qualities of Manitoulin as well as the quality of the landscape itself. These elements are representations of what is significant and relevant to the area they are found within.

The artifacts are abstract representations created by local artists and residents or 3D scanned and printed. The Manitou Miikana experience with these wayfinding elements becomes a distributed and respectful alteration of the traditional museum. The artifacts are not removed from their site, but they express the history and memory of the Island within their respective locations.
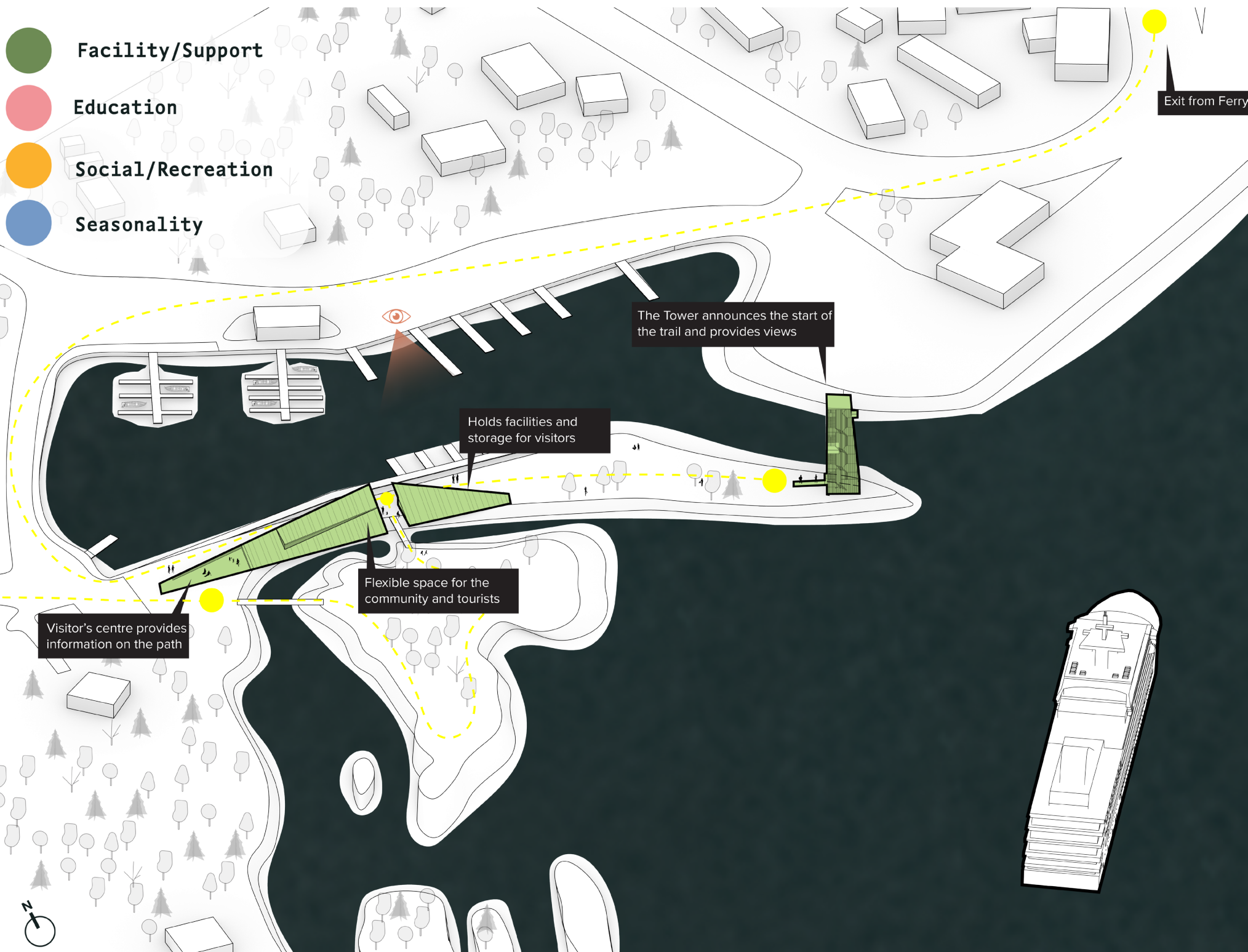
Fig. 5.10, Manitoulin Alva

Fig. 5.11, Tombasil metal, Source: The University of Texas at Austin

Lakeside Boardwalk

Incorporating the present through the framing of views or materials

Meadow Pavilion

Large pavilions relate to the design & story of the wayfinding elements

Urban wayfinding elements are smaller and placed more frequent

Forest Path

Wayfinding elements educate on the memory, history, and ecology of the specific area

Wetland Boardwalk

Boardwalks are used for access through sensitive ecological areas

Fig. 5.12, Four sections through Manitou Miikana with varied wayfinding elements

Legend

● **Facility/Support**

● **Education**

● **Social/Recreation**

● **Seasonality**

Exit from Ferry

The Tower announces the start of the trail and provides views

Holds facilities and storage for visitors

Flexible space for the community and tourists

Visitor's centre provides information on the path

SOUTH BAYMOUTH CENTRE

Two larger architectural elements were developed to support the Manitou Miikana system. These structures act as supporting and retreat elements that facilitate communal spaces and winter programming.

The building in South Baymouth holds an information and tourist center that kicks off the Manitou Miikana system. The smaller portion on the right contains storage lockers and washrooms. Beyond highlighting the trail, the building serves as a needed arrival and information center on general Manitoulin Island information as well. The building also provides space for recreation and socialization for the South Baymouth community.

The design is based on a large rock formation within South Baymouth. The building rises from the coast mimicking the elongated scraped rock of the surrounding landscape, which was carved by glaciers. The materiality of the roof relates to the wayfinding elements, emulating the surrounding alvar and limestone textures. The lighthouse announces itself to the Chi-Cheemaun Ferry, and provides views. It is constructed of local cedar.

Fig. 5.13, The South Baymouth Centre

MINDEMOYA–M'CHIGEENG PAVILION

In between the town of Mindemoya and the Indigenous community of M'Chigeeng, an interstitial space is created that intersects with two mobility routes of the Manitou Miikana system. This building houses a crossroad of culture and people. A social and flexible space for residents from both communities to converse and a destination for people traveling the trail.

The design is unobtrusive, essentially lifting up the beach and grass to welcome travelers of the path and local communities. Its location creates a year-round area on Lake Mindemoya for both winter and summer activities, with a supporting structure that holds information and history on both Mindemoya and M'chigeeng.
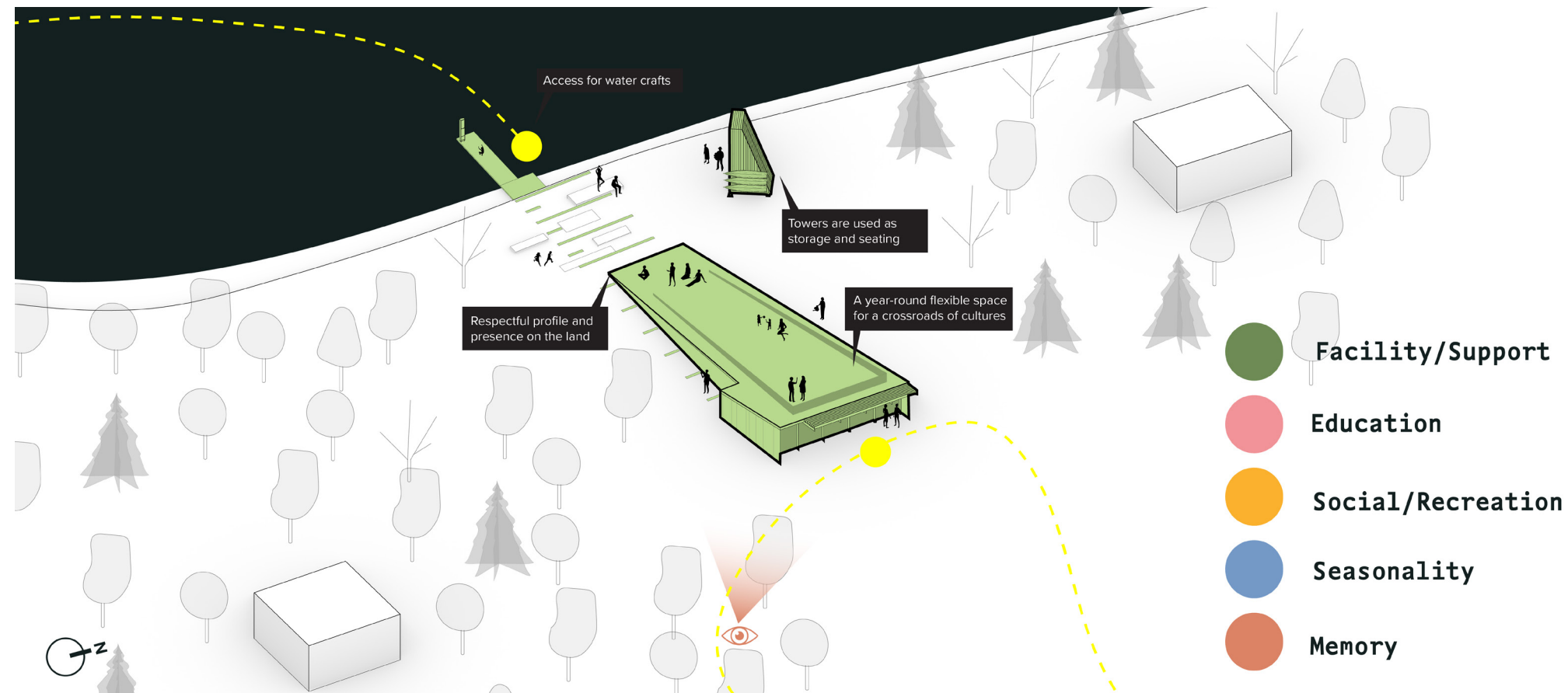
Fig. 5.14, The Mindemoya-M'Chigeeng Pavilion

Access for water crafts

Towers are used as storage and seating

Respectful profile and presence on the land

A year-round flexible space for a crossroads of cultures

Facility/Support

Education

Social/Recreation
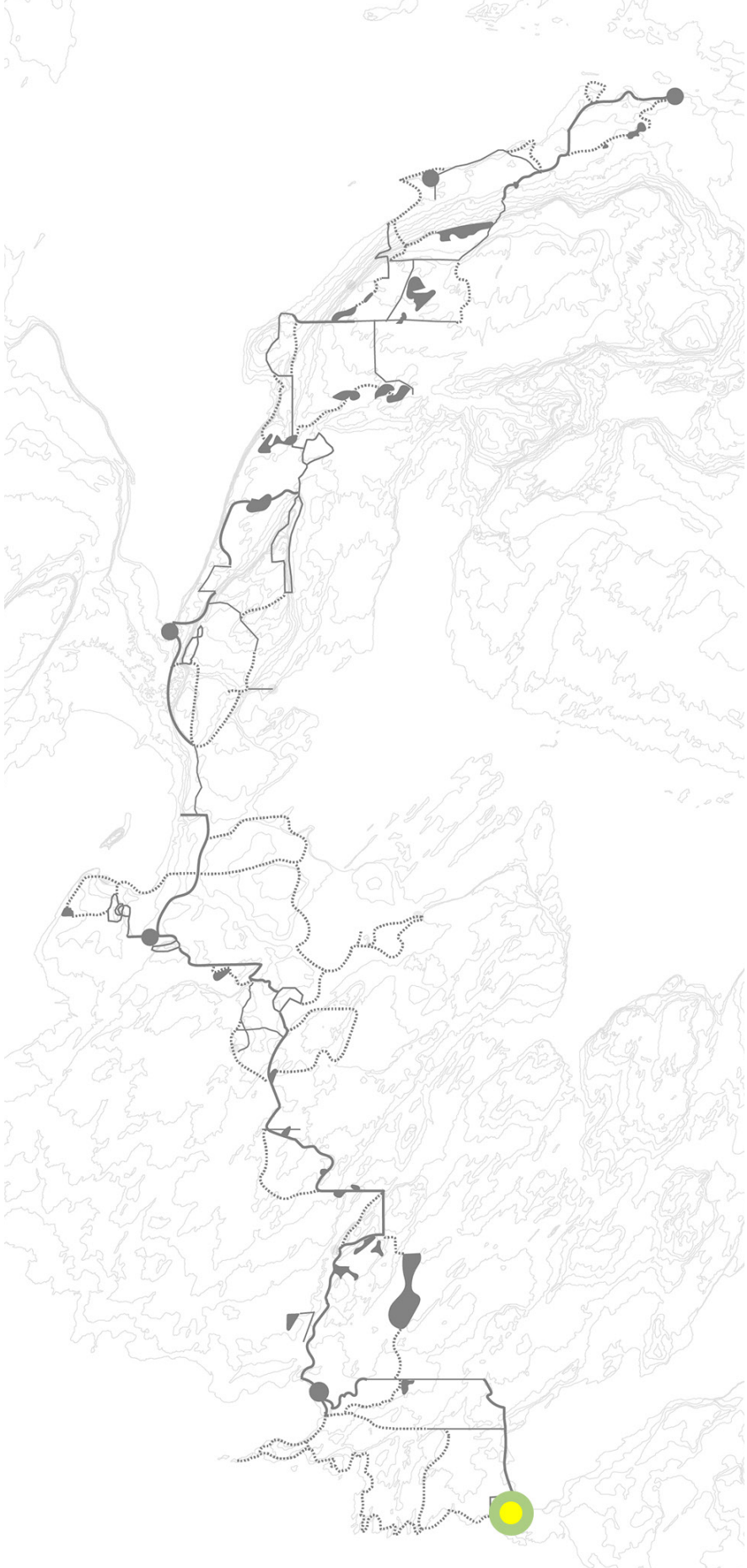
Seasonality

Memory

THE MANITOU MIIKANA STORY

The following pages travel through five moments within the Manitou Miikana system and delve into the relationship between the path network and architectural elements with further information on their form and materiality.
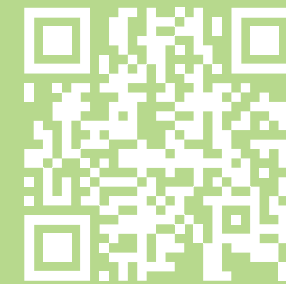
MANITOU MIIKANA
SOUTH BAYMOUTH

Southern Coast | Summer

After arriving from the Chi-Cheemaun ferry in the evening, I see the South Baymouth Centre and the contemporary lighthouse located on the breakwater between the marina and Lake Huron. These two structures mark the beginning of the Mantiou Miikana. The low-lying building is a much-needed information centre that would serve as a guide for all visitors, as well as a flexible community space for local residents.
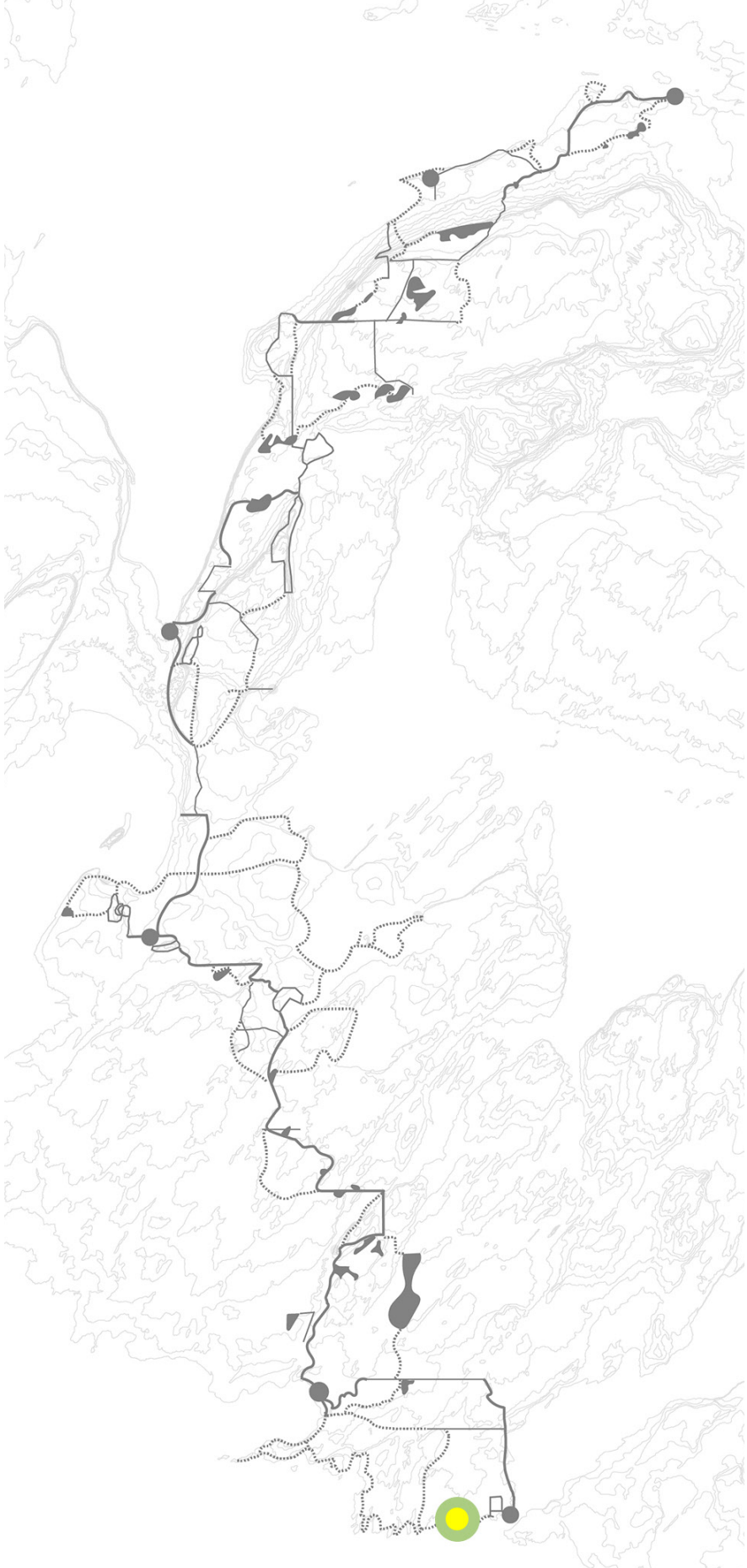
The unassuming building presents itself once I arrive in the town of South Baymouth as it rises up from the Lake Huron shore, mirroring the small islands carved from the glaciers many years ago. The materiality carried through the building and wayfinding elements emulate Manitoulin's unique limestone and shale geology. The new lighthouse acts as a warm and welcoming lantern to visitors passing aboard the ferry.

SOUTH BAYMOUTH CENTRE

OUTSIDE OF SOUTH BAYMOUTH

Southern Coast | Summer

The path system begins along the southern shore of Manitoulin, where the alvar coast consisting of limestone and dolostone, becomes quite visible. Present along the path are these wayfinding pieces, which are guides but also tell the story of Manitoulin Island. The objects placed within them represent an x-ray view into the historical, biological, and archaeological elements of the region, represented in the specific area relevant to each element. The environment itself is also celebrated with these framing pieces.

MANITOU MIIKANA
Sheguiandah Artifacts 01

SOUTH BAYMOUTH - MINDEMOYA

Forest | Fall
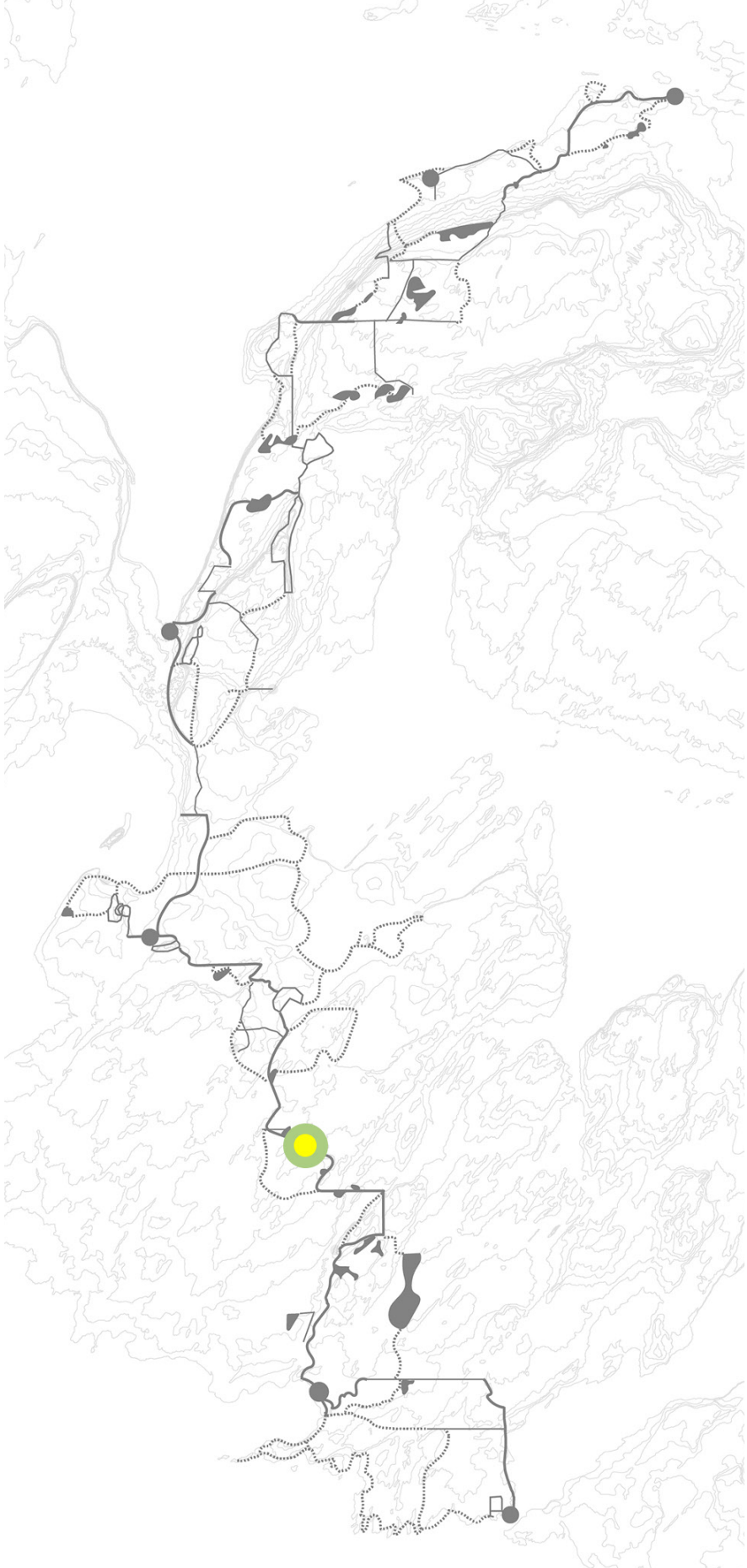
In the fall, Manitoulin becomes quite vibrant in colour, with the new path allowing immersion into its dense forests. The Island remains temperate due to the proximity of Lake Huron, and with the new path, Manitoulin would become more active within the fall months.
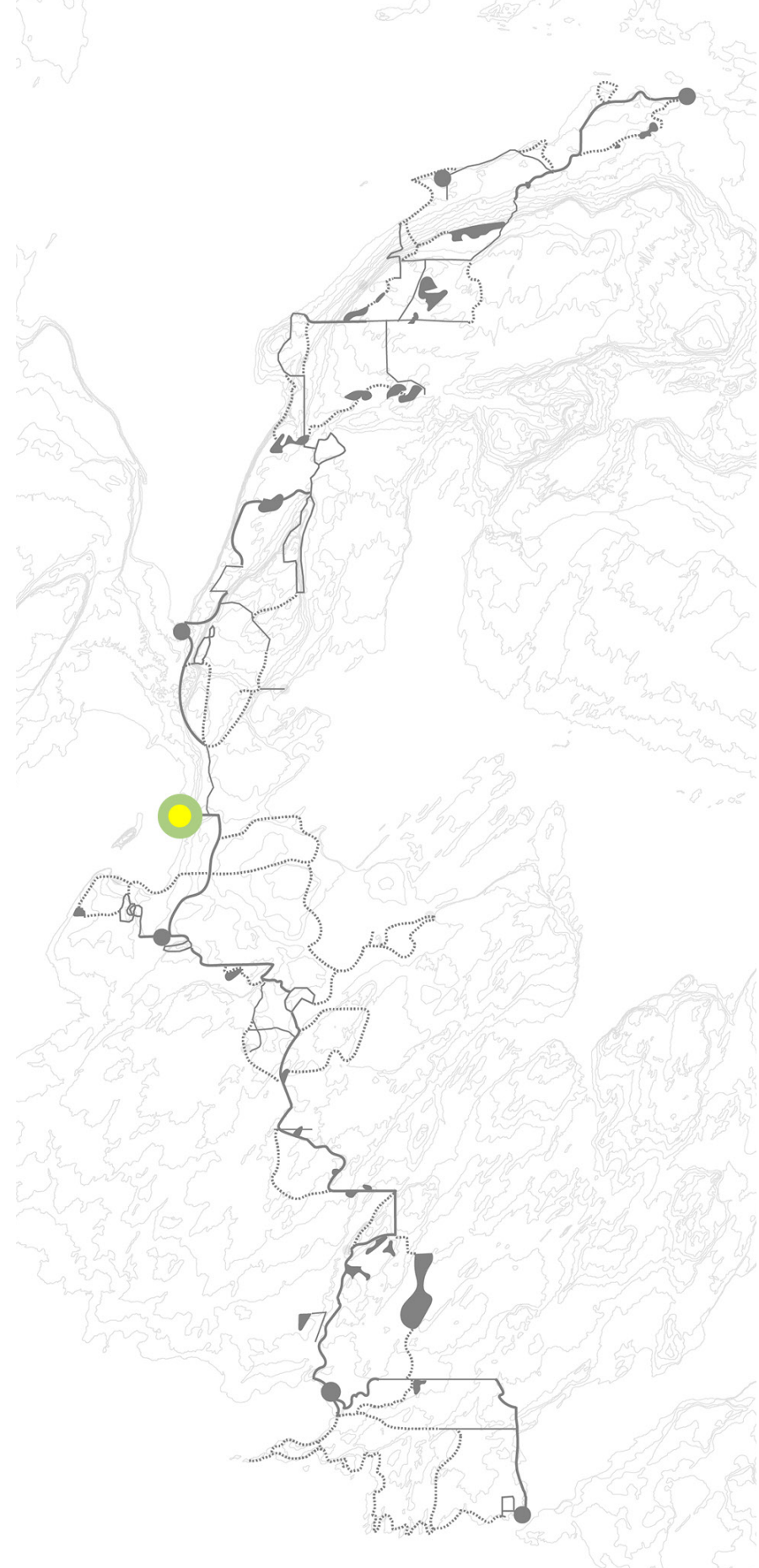
At this point in the path, I am away from the bustle of the nearby towns, which is why larger wayfinding elements, like this piece, provide a spot to rest and collect waste. This particular element provides information on the variety of wildflowers located in the region.

MANITOU MIIKANA
Wild Flowers 01

MANITOU MIIKANA

MINDEMOYA - M'CHIGEENG

Lake Mindemoya | Winter

On the border between the Indigenous community of M'Chigeeng and the town of Mindemoya, a new building is present on Lake Mindemoya. This pavilion becomes a middle ground and communal space for both communities and visitors travelling the trail. The Pavilion provides public access to Lake Mindemoya and allows for a secondary canoe or kayak mobility option along the Manitou Miikana path. This communal lake access point also becomes a great opportunity for winter programming and activities, with the pavilion serving as a warm indoor space during these colder months.

The design also relates to the wayfinding elements with the canoe piece framed by the Tombasil metal. This artifact acknowledges the traditional mobility of the Anishnaabe people on Manitoulin Island. The handmade birchbark canoe was built by young adults from M'Chigeeng in the same method the Anishnaabe people had for millennia.

FREER NATURE RESERVE

Northern Coast | Spring
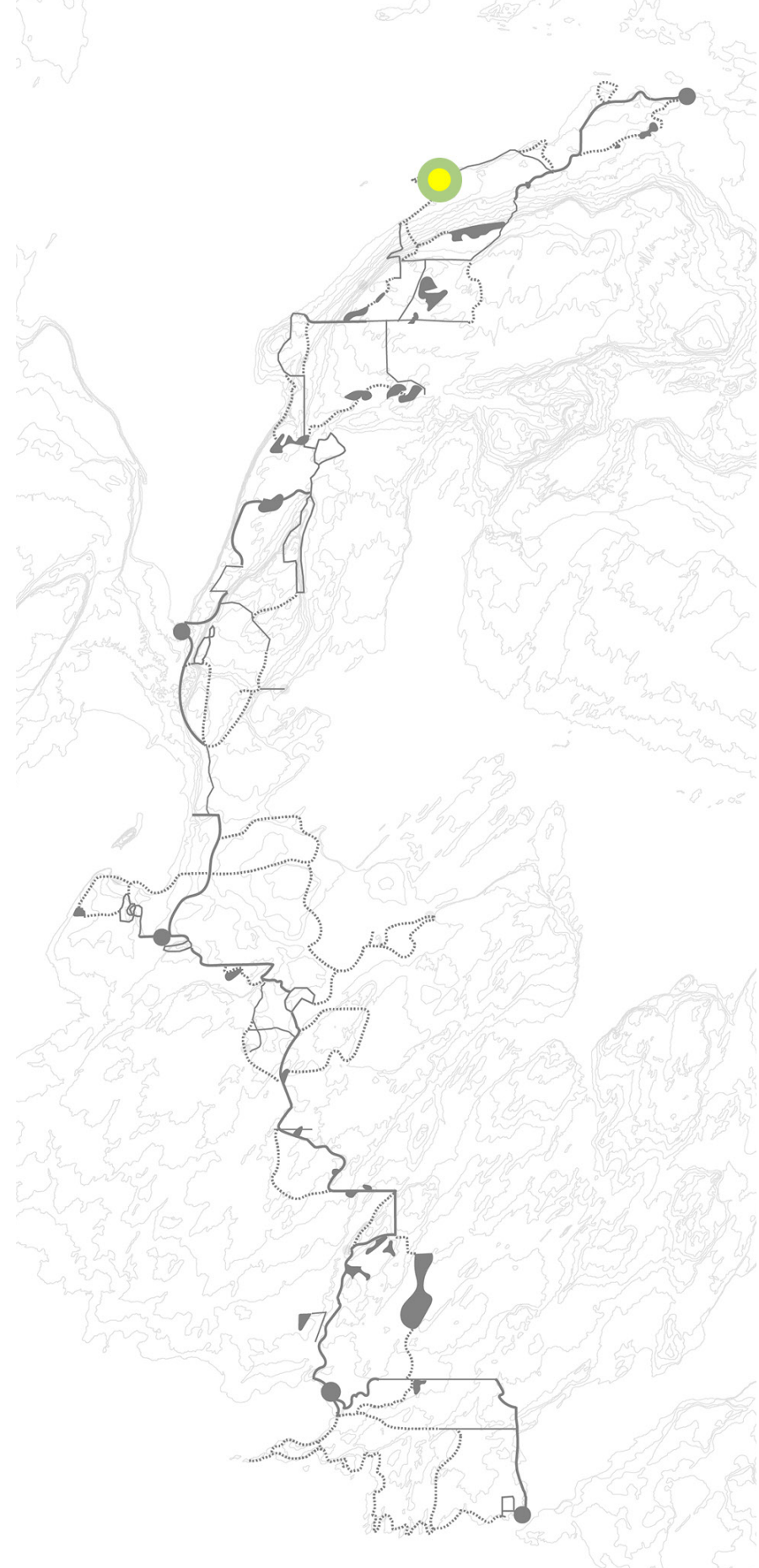
The final stop in our story is between M'Chigeeng and the northernmost town, Little Current, at the Freer nature reserve. A small pavilion on the northern coast educates on the reserve's rare wildlife while also providing outdoor space for residents, cottagers and Manitou Miikana travellers to relax. The pavilion is constructed of cedar with elements of tombasil that frame information on the nature reserve's wildlife in a similar way to the wayfinding elements.

01

02

03

04

05
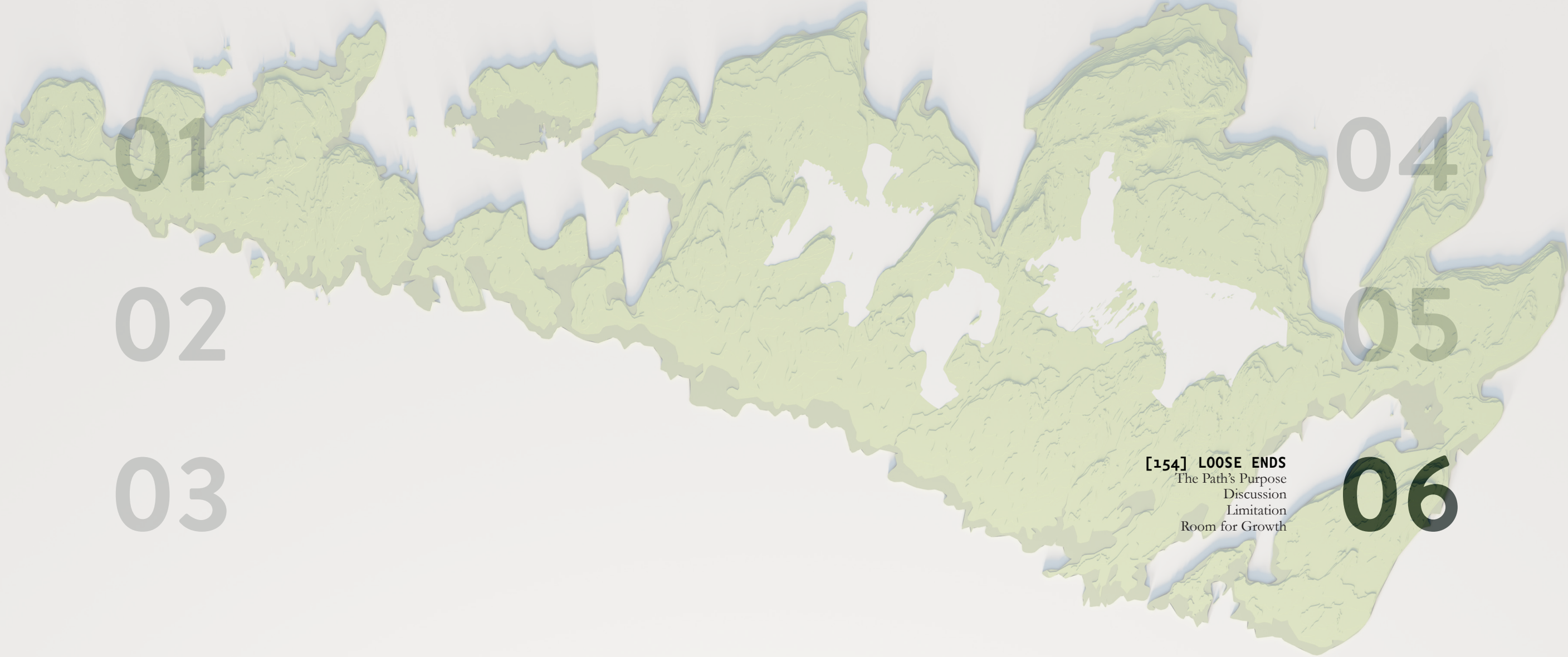
[154] LOOSE ENDS
The Path's Purpose
Discussion
Limitation
Room for Growth

06

THE PATH'S PURPOSE

The purpose of Manitou Miikana is directly connected with the four pillars that are based upon the framing concepts and challenges specific to Manitoulin Island. The diagram on the right outlines how these pillars should be addressed in relation to the framing concepts,

stakeholders, corresponding literature and precedents. The discussion on the next page explores the results of the Manitou Miikana system and explains how each pillar is addressed through this path proposal.

Purpose	Stakeholder	Method/Precedent
Foster relationships through communal space and access	All Manitoulin Residents Local Businesses Tourists	**Greenways** illustrate how pedestrian paths can bridge disconnected communities and become a catalyst for economical and recreational growth. **Research of resident and tourist relationships** shows how the creation of communal space can build positive feelings between groups.
Inspire Environmental stewardship	All Manitoulin Residents Local Businesses Environment	**A study involving interviews with a vast number of tourists** has shown that the largest motivator for sustainable travel is the immersion and learning that occurs through direct experiences during travel. Viewing a positive effect a sustainable trip can have on residents was also inspiration.
Create Economic activation outside of the summer months	All Manitoulin Residents Local Businesses	The **PEI Island Walk** demonstrates the potential for this proposal, illustrating not only the drastic increase of this type of long distance hiking tourism, but the economical benefits it can have. The simple trail of the Island walk also strengthened visitation outside of the summer months.
Acknowledge and educate on Manitoulin's culture and history	All Manitoulin Residents Local Businesses Environment	The concept of **Placeknowing** implies the success of a placemaking intervention relies on its awareness and connection to what is already present. The idea was to connect with Manitoulin in a way that educates the walker while directly addressing needs from the residents.

Fig. 6.0, A diagram outlining the path's purpose through the outlining of the four pillars and precedent/literature

DISCUSSION + LIMITATIONS

Manitou Miikana has become a proposal with the potential to alleviate general tourism-related challenges that were witnessed within the initial rural analyses. These challenges, alongside the research questions and framing concepts that became more Manitoulin-specific, were all integrated into the Four Pillars. In order to assess the success of the proposal, each of the Four Pillars was directly addressed. The reasoning behind these responses is based on the literature and precedents from the previous page.

1. Foster relationships through communal space and access:
Overall, the path system provides a communal experience that connects indigenous and non-indigenous communities as well as tourists. This, along with supporting indoor spaces, provides social opportunities for both residents and tourists. The strategy of communal experiences is based on the research of resident and tourist interactions.

2. Inspire environmental stewardship:
Manitou Miikana provides a common experience that is based on the idea of 'In sight, in mind,' where tourists and residents have direct interactions with one another as well as the environment. This way of thinking derives from the strategy of encouraging a sustainable mindset through direct immersion.

3. Create economic activation outside of the summer months:
Manitou Miikana as a whole provides a large tourism attraction that, based on the PEI Island Walk precedent, will inspire a greater range of visitors within different seasons. The path is designed with a variety of mobility options and activities targeted for year-round recreation.

4. Acknowledge and educate on Manitoulin's culture and history
The wayfinding elements are designed to highlight important elements of Manitoulin's history, ecology, culture, and people in the area relevant to that information. The path itself immerses visitors in the environment and provides accessibility vertically through the Island. This is an aspect deeply connected with the Island's history.

The limitation of this study relates to the project's heavy focus on a singular location. The thesis proposal is specific to Manitoulin Island and is not replicable in the other communities that were studied. However, this was a deliberate decision based upon the framing concept of Placeknowing, which calls for a contextually driven approach to placemaking. The concept determines the success of an intervention through its relevance and emulation of the surrounding context. It was because of this concept and its connection to Indigenous planning that a less prototypical response was created. The purpose, however, was that the process and analysis of a singular rural location that has comparable challenges to many others could inspire a system of engagement for the other neglected regions in Canada.

Another potential limitation is the subjective nature of the designer's bias and optimism. In the end, the designer makes the final decision in terms of where the path travels and how the architecture speaks to Manitoulin. It is not possible to guarantee the success of Manitou Miikana nor its ability to achieve the desired objectives outlined in the Four Pillars. The success of this proposal can only be determined through actual implementation, even on a small scale.

PROVIDING ROOM FOR GROWTH

The concept of Placeknowing also places importance on the intervention's ability to benefit residents in the far future. Manitou Miikana took this into consideration and looked to provide room for growth beyond its applicability in the present.

Manitou Miikana not only offers new opportunities for businesses to operate outside of the summer but also provides collaboration opportunities between local businesses through engagement and support for the trail. Along with economic sustainability, this new experience provides year-round recreational opportunities through its general design and ability to host social and sporting events.

Additional services will be necessary to create a functional experience. These services bring opportunities for local business to expand either their current services or new businesses, creating more jobs and opportunities for residents. These services could include accommodation and food support, trail guide/information, shuttle and luggage transfer, and support of new events that come with the trail.

Fig. 6.1, A diagram illustrating the expanded opportunities and services across Manitoulin

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LIST OF FIGURES

MANITOU MIIKANA

PARTICIPATORY/
CO-CONSTRUCTED

Developing opportunities for connection, education,
and preservation on Manitoulin Island, Ontario

INTERSUBJECTIVE/
CONTEXTUAL

ASSUMPTIONS

Manitoulin Island experiences growth in tourism, with both positive and negative impacts.

Manitoulin Island lacks social space and connections between individual communities.

Manitoulin's local businesses face challenges due to the seasonal fluctuation of tourists and population. It lacks a developed winter culture.

It is important to preserve Manitoulin's natural environment and character while promoting growth and interaction.

Strengthening relations between indigenous, non-indigenous individuals, and tourists supports community sustainability.

Colonization disrupted the traditional mobility and land use on Manitoulin Island.

Manitoulin requires a tailored approach, considering its unique history, culture, environment, and scale.

Tourists seek a deeper and more meaningful experience on Manitoulin Island. (Residents aim for development to align with this perspective).

FRAMING CONCEPTS

Sustainability
• **Lit Rev:** Methodology for Evaluating the Rural Tourism Potentials
• **Precedent:** Joe Louis Greenway
• **Precedent:** Shelbourne Common Pavilion
• **Precedent:** The Forks

"Sustainability for rural areas is more than just a sustainable economic growth. The concept of sustainability in rural areas should integrate environmental, economical, cultural and social factors." (Trukhachev, 2014, p. 1)

Sense of Place
• **Lit Rev:** Sense of Place and Place Attachment in Tourism
• **Precedent:** PEI Island Walk
• **Precedent:** Shelby Farms Park

"One of the crucial things for achieving and maintaining sustainable tourism development in a destination is to create a positive interaction between residents and foreign tourists." (Armenski, et al., 2011, p. 1)

Resident + Tourist Relationships
• **Lit Rev:** Interaction between tourists and residents: Influence on tourism development
• **Precedent:** PEI Island Walk

"Place attachment, identity, and sense of place are a personal and important thing whether it be for those who live in a place or those who visit." (Chen, 2021, p. 2).

Placeknowing
• **Lit Rev:** Rematriation and PlaceKnowing
• **Precedent:** University of Manitoba's Campus plan (Indigenous Design & Planning Principles)
• **Precedent:** Shelby Farms Park

"Placeknowing is grounded in the idea that places should be developed to acknowledge and sustain the meanings of culture and identity into the future." (Jojola, 2022)

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can an intervention or experience influence a shift to the current mode of tourism on Manitoulin Island, taking into account the established community and environment?

What opportunities exist to create new spaces that foster positive connections and relationships across Manitoulin?

How can the proposed intervention or experience align with the unique character of Manitoulin Island and inspire future development to be in line with it?

How can Manitoulin extend its active period and promote opportunities for community-based growth?

PILLAR

Acknowledge and educate on Manitoulin's culture and history

Foster relationships through communal space and access

Inspire environmental stewardship

Create economic activation outside of the summer months

METHOD

Interviews + Public Engagement Analysis

Seasonal Site Visits + Analysis

Comparable Rural Case Studies + Strategies

Historical Tradition + Treaty Analysis

Mapping or Spatial Analysis

Existing Tourism Strategies + Spatial Precedent Analysis

Design Explorations (Testing Concepts)

Development of a multi-scale approach

IMPLICATION

01 The path system provides a communal experience that connects indigenous and non-indigenous communities as well as tourists.

02 A sustainable mindset is built through direction immersion in the environment and the existing communities.

03 The path is designed with a variety of mobility options and activities targeted for year-round recreation.

04 The wayfinding elements highlight important elements of Manitoulin's history, ecology, culture, and people in the area relevant to that information.

05 The process and analysis of Manitoulin Island has the potential to inspire a system of engagement for other neglected rural communities in Canada.

Image on the right: Fig. A.0, Concepts & Methods Diagram

South Baymouth

Holds the ferry dock to receive the Chi-Cheemaun ferry from Tobermory. Lacks wayfinding and information, which is addressed with the new Visitor's Centre

Blue Jay Creek

A park with a unique landscape of sand dunes, streams and access to Lake Huron. It is currently undergoing restoration efforts with the desire to reinvigorate the abandoned Michael's Bay on the north.

Mindemoya

One of the largest towns on the Island that has difficulty staying active outside of the summer. The heart or core between the two entrance ways and several communities including M'Chigeeng.

M'Chigeeng

An Indigenous community which lacks a common space between it and Mindemoya. Potential to highlight history and culture as well as the film school.

Freer Nature Reserve

A large nature reserve with access to Lake Huron with small accommodation amenities that could be enhanced to serve the Manitou Miikana travelers

Little Current

The only access point outside of the summer months. It is the largest settlement on the Island.

4.5 mi   2.6 mi   3 mi 1.3 mi   3 mi   1.4 mi   2.5 mi   3.8 mi   3.7 mi   5 mi   5.3 mi   2.5 mi   3 mi

Lighthouses + Viewpoint

+   1.5 miles
Minimal Slope - Natural Earth

Lake Walks + AP

+   4 miles
Minimal Slope - Natural Earth

Boat Launch

Access to Lake Manitou for water and winter activities

Riding Stables

+   0 miles
Minimal Slope - hard surface

Rock Lake

Clearing/wetland and stream that connects with South Pine Lake. Requires intermittent rest stop

Lake Mindemoya + AP

Connection with housing from Mindemoya core and access to the lake. Potential for winter programming and activation between these communities.

Wetlands, Streams + Lakes

+   1.5 miles
Medium Slope - Natural Earth + Boardwalk

AP + Nature Reserve

Nature Researve allows access to the major highway

Visitor Centre

Access Point

Mobility intersection - Lodging offered at this intersection. Opportunity for trail head and parking.

AP + Campground

Mobility intersection - Lodging offered at this intersection. Opportunity for trail head and parking.

M-M Pavilion

A new pavilion that becomes a retreat between Mindemoya and M'Chigeeng. It provides desired lake access.

AP + Cup&Saucer

Mobility intersection - Lodging offered at this intersection. Opportunity for trail head and parking.

AP + Community

The trail intersects with the major highway and an indigenous settlement known as Aundeck Omni Kaning

Fig. A.1, Phase 01 Timeline [horizontal]

Organization

Individuals that can form the non-governmental organization/non-profit are:

Destination Manitoulin
Local tourism organization which was highlighted as a weakness by stakeholders

Love Family
Established family on the island with property to host individuals seeking the trails

Love Family
Established family on the island with property to host individuals seeking the trails

Love Family
Established family on the island with property to host individuals seeking the trails

Partners

Government of Ontario

Wikwemikong Tourism

Ontario Trails & Hike Ontario

Fednor, Industry Canada

Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy

Northeastern Ontario

LAMBAC

Stakeholders

- Residents
- Tourists
- Businesses
- Economic Developers Council of Ontario
- Ontario Recreation Facilities Association
- Ontario Trails
- Canadian Trails Federation
- The Ontario Trails Council
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- National Trails Coalition
- Trail Youth Initiatives
- Hike Ontario
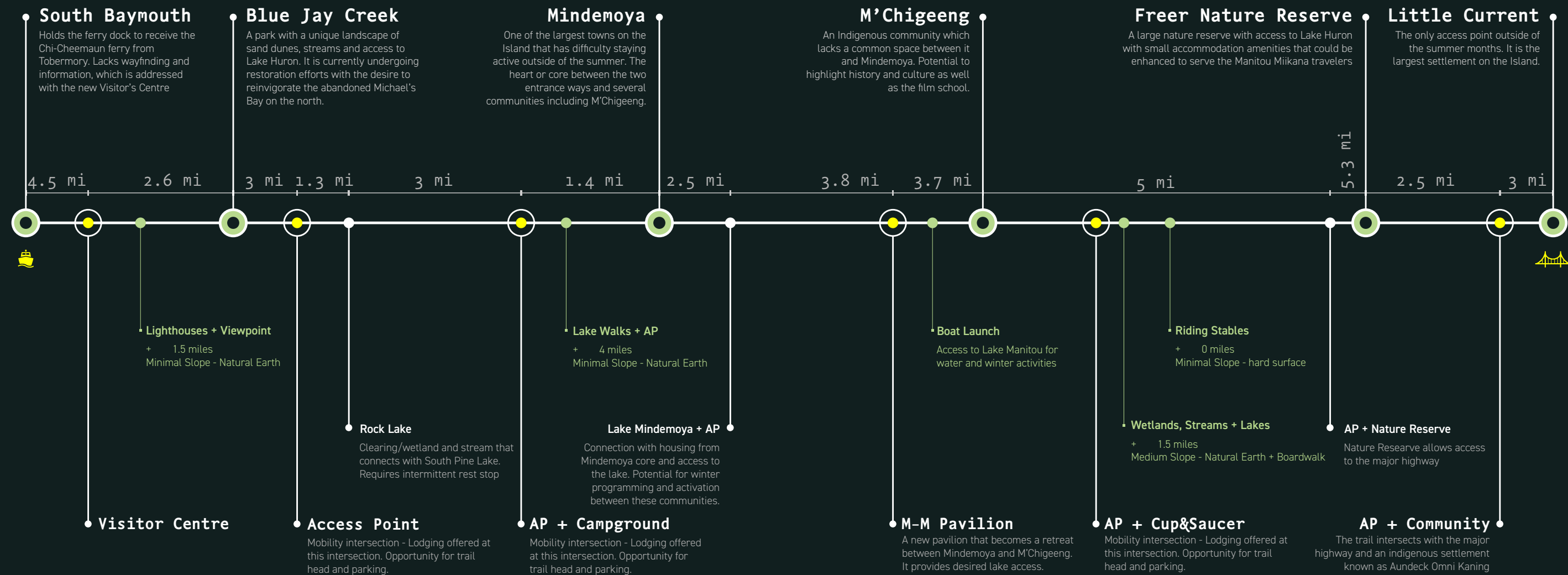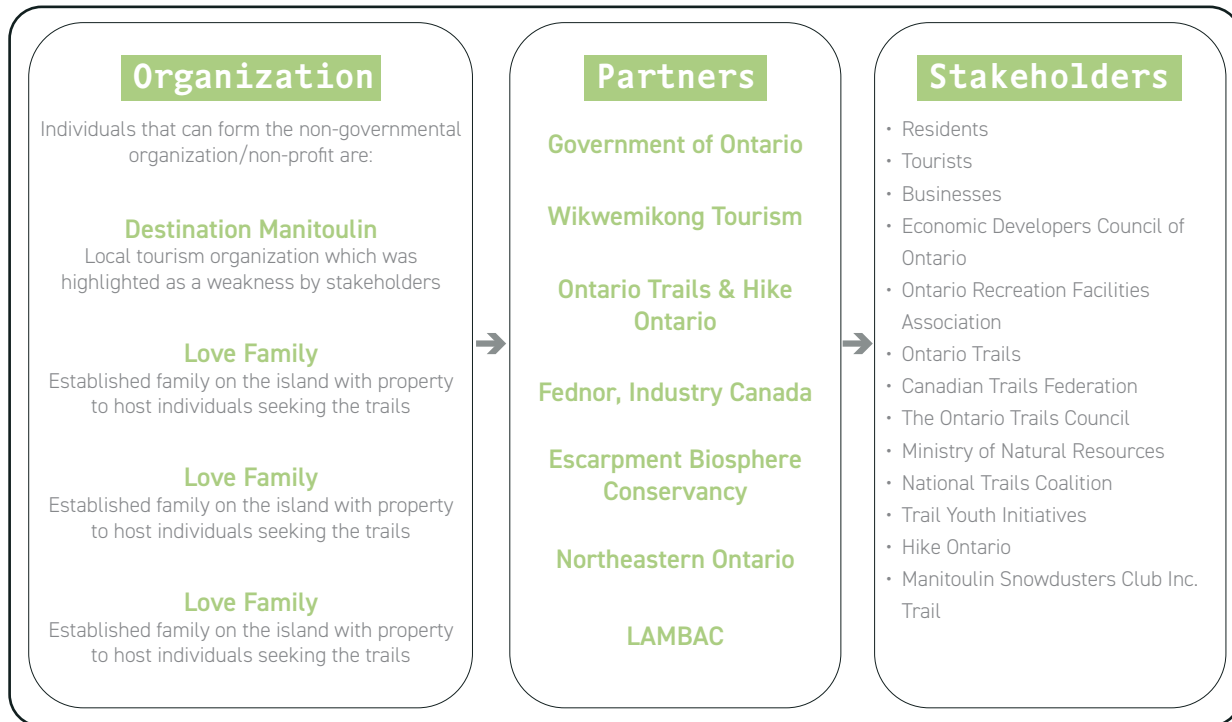- Manitoulin Snowdusters Club Inc. Trail

Fig. A.2, Implementation Strategy

How can a path travel through all of Manitoulin?

IMPLEMENTATION + POLICY

Crossing private land for recreational activities like hiking and cross-country skiing is a common practice in certain regions of Scandinavia. Laws related to trespassing for accessing public footpaths or rights of way are more flexible in in some parts of Europe.

In Scandinavia, a public access regime is in place, which is based on various legal frameworks enabling individuals to move across private property in addition to publicly accessible land.

This is known as the right of public access and was founded in the Scandinavian tradition of outdoor recreation.

MANITOU MIIKANA

Developing opportunities for connection, education, and
preservation on Manitoulin Island, Ontario