



# The Rail Trail

ENGSOCTY 2X03 Assignment #2

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# Introduction

This year, I found out about the Hamilton-Brantford rail trail, a 32 km biking and hiking trail just down the street from my student house. Although I had wanted to explore the trail, I hadn't found an opportunity to go out and explore. So, being given the task of exploring an area near me, I seized the opportunity to go on the trail. I didn't cover a lot of distance, but I stopped several times to take in the scenery and appreciate my surroundings.

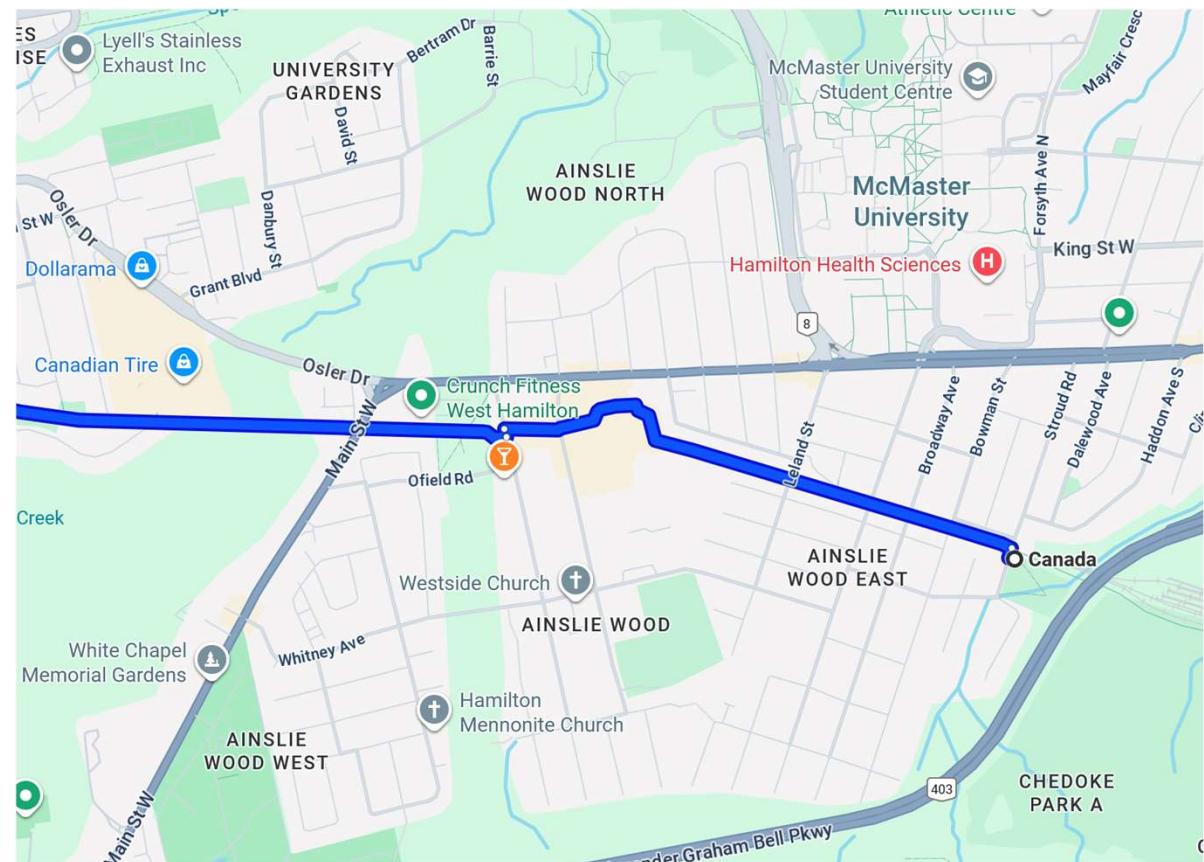


Image: Google Maps

# The Entrance

The first stop on the journey was the entrance to the path. This is where I found Hertha, the bike I used on the trail. The entrance felt very inviting, begging me to choose whether I should travel west or east. I decided that I should go west, as far as the Hamilton Bike Share would allow me to go. I felt a sense of excitement here, eager to explore an area that was so close to home yet had a completely different atmosphere than the surrounding area. I could hear the wind rustling the trees, and the sounds of other bikes zipping by, calling me into the woods.



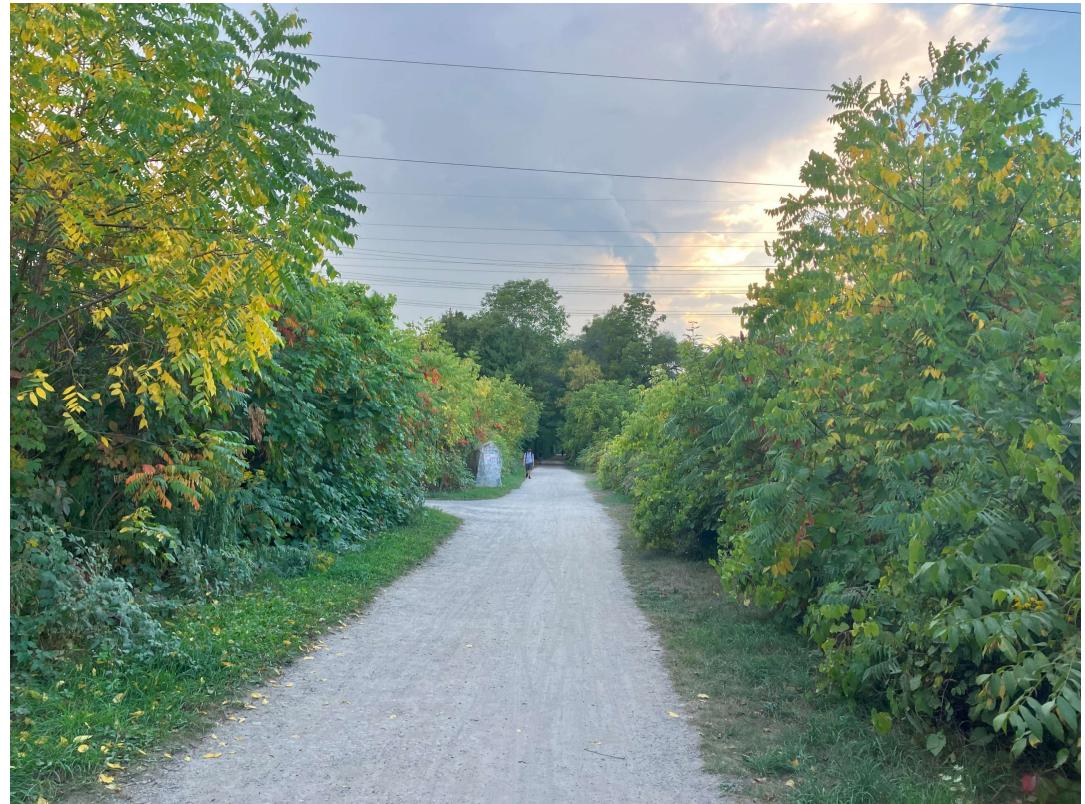
# Fortinos

The first landmark on the trail was Fortinos on Main Street West. After a short stretch of the path, the green veil of the trees broke. I felt a sense of familiarity as I saw the store that I had been to several times before, only this time it was from a new direction. It made me think about what groceries I needed, and I started planning when I would be able to come back. My immersion in nature was briefly taken away by the dull gray parking lot and the sounds of the cars on Main Street drowning out the rustling leaves and birdcalls.



# The Woods

Fortinos was the divide between the paved part of the trail that wove through the neighbourhoods and the gravel trail that ventured further into the forest. When I found the continuation of the trail, I assumed the path would be more of what I had already ridden through. I was very pleasantly surprised when I found myself fully enclosed by the trees on either side as the sounds of traffic disappeared. I could hear cicadas chirping as I soaked in the surroundings.



# The Bridge

Just when I thought the trail had nothing new to surprise me with, I got to a long wooden bridge over a luscious green valley. Without thinking, I got off my bike and stood at the edge of the bridge, admiring the view. I felt at peace, given a sense of comfort by the ambience. Not long after the bridge, I saw a squirrel leap across two trees, flying over the path. I was amazed by the way it clung onto the branch as it started swaying back and forth. I've always loved exploring and being in nature, and I felt excited knowing that there is still so much more to see and explore in the area.



# The Parking Lot

Although I only explored a small segment of the trail, I turned around at the end of the bike zone outside of the University Plaza. I entered the plaza to end my ride and return my bike, and was greeted to the back parking lot behind the Shoppers Drug Mart. I was instantly transported back to last year, when my driving instructor took me here to practice parking. I didn't think I would have a reason to come to this corner again, but once I did, all the memories started coming back. Being back there made me feel slightly distressed, but also relieved that those days were behind me. After stopping at the parking lot, I walked back toward Main Street feeling ready to return to the many assignments that were waiting for me at home.

