



Committee of the Whole Report

Report Number: PR2023-002
Meeting Date: April 4, 2023
Title: Trails Master Plan 2023
Description: Final Trails Master Plan
Author and Title: Jenn Johnson, Manager, Parks and Recreation

Recommendation(s):

That Report PR2023-002, **Trails Master Plan 2023**, be received;

That the Trails Master Plan Update - Final Report attached as Appendix A to Report PR2023-002, be endorsed;

That staff incorporate the guidelines and standards identified in the Trails Master Plan - Final Report, Section 2.2 – Design, when designing and installing signage along the Victoria Rail Trail (approved 2023 Special Project);

That staff identify increases in staffing needs, as outlined in the Trails Master Plan - Final Report, Section 3 – Implementation and Management, through future operating budgets;

That identified capital and operating needs be incorporated into the Long-term Financial Plan 2022-2031; and

That By-law 2007-107, Consolidated Trails By-law, be updated to incorporate revisions as recommended within the Trails Master Plan – Final Report, including the restriction of motorized traffic on the Victoria Rail Trail, from Garnet Graham Park to Northline Road during the summer season, and the revised by-law be brought back to Council for approval.

Department Head: _____

Financial/Legal/HR/Other: _____

Chief Administrative Officer: _____

Background:

The inaugural Trails Master Plan for Kawartha Lakes was completed in 2006. Almost 15 years have past and an update to the original plan is needed to address current concerns and standards. The scope of work, as outlined in 2021-37-CP Consulting Services to Update the Trails Master Plan, was awarded to Cima+ Canada Inc. in July 2021 and has steadily moved forward to the final report stage.

Community engagement was a foundational piece in the overall process to update the plan. Input from technical agencies, stakeholders and user groups, Community Working Group and the general public was gathered at specific points throughout Phase 1 and 2 of the planning process. The Community Working Group was comprised of representation from Council, Kawartha Lakes Parks Advisory Committee, Kawartha Trans Canada Trail Association, Green Trails Alliance, Kawartha Lakes Snowmobile Club, and Kawartha ATV Association. Round 1 of engagement provided information on the master planning process, vision and principles, and the existing condition analysis. Round 2 introduced the proposed area-specific approach and trail improvement areas. Feedback on the proposed design guidelines, projects, and future trail priorities was gathered. The information received through the engagement and outreach sessions provided direction and support to help guide the basis for Trails Master Plan Update – Final Report recommendations. Along with the scheduled sessions, there was a continuous opportunity for the public to provide input into the development of the plan. The Jump In platform was utilized to share and gather information.

At the Council Meeting of September 27, 2022, a presentation was provided outlining the process and identifying findings and potential recommendations (Appendix B). At that meeting Council adopted the following resolutions:

CR2022-318

Moved By Councillor Seymour-Fagan

Seconded By Councillor Veale

That Report **PR2022-004, Trails Master Plan Update**, be received for information.

CR2022-319

Moved By Councillor Elmslie

Seconded By Councillor Veale

That the final Trails Master Plan identify the section of the Victoria Rail Trail from Garnet Graham Park to Northline Road restricting all motorized vehicle traffic and travel during the summer season; and

That any necessary by-law(s) be forwarded to council to implement this decision effective the 2023 summer season of trail use.

This report provides the final report and recommendations, and addresses the above direction.

Rationale:

The Trails Master Plan Update – Final Report (Appendix A) has been developed with the intent of serving as the City’s policy support, blueprint, and guide to trail planning, design, implementation, management, and maintenance. The document aims to provide the City with:

- A robust, thoughtful, and informed update to the 2006 Trails Master Plan.
- A plan that reflects the unique conditions and context found within Kawartha Lakes.
- The identification of feasible and implementable series of trail projects aimed at improving the experience and encouraging participation in trail activities.
- Strategies to increase awareness of trails in Kawartha Lakes with a commitment to greater accessibility and improved recreational mobility.

The Trails Master Plan Update (TMPU) provides guidance for trails in Kawartha Lakes not just for the context of today, but also for well into the future. It is recognized that conditions change, and Kawartha Lakes will be met with new considerations, constraints, and opportunities over the 20-year horizon of this plan, that may not be predictable at this time. The TMPU recommendations are adaptable and responsive to changing conditions. This means that when new trail opportunities do arise, staff can explore these opportunities with the tools set out in the TMPU and support a

coordinated effort between what can be done now, and what may be able to be accommodated in the future.

Trails Master Plan Update vs. Active Transportation Master Plan

It is important to acknowledge the work that is being done by the City on complementary projects, most importantly the Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP) which was in development at the same time as the TMPU. At the core, both plans aim to provide Kawartha Lakes with recommendations and strategies to improve mobility for people who live, work, and play within the City – whether it be for transportation i.e. day to day trip purposes or recreational purposes. Considering the TMPU and the ATMP are being completed by different departments, there are different scope elements, drivers, and implementation priorities. There are two critical differences in the TMPU and the ATMP providing strong rationale as to why they were completed separately:

- A trails master plan addresses a very specific type of facility – a trail. Trails are unique in that they are found off-road and typically highlight areas of natural significance for recreational purposes. They also can be used for both active and non-active forms of transportation.
- An ATMP looks at providing proposed design interventions that address the way people move using active forms of transportation such as walking, cycling or other self-propelled forms of transportation. It only identifies opportunities for a specific type of user and typically pertains to on-road or in-boulevard facilities.

Final Report Recommendations

The Trails Master Plan Update – Final Report contains six recommendation categories:

- Trail Infrastructure
- Trail Design
- Trail Education and Outreach
- Implementation and Management
- Trail Costing and Funding
- Maintenance and Enforcement

Each category has multiple recommendations that support the overall vision, principles and objectives of the updated plan.

Trail Infrastructure

This category identifies four (4) types of trail projects – Trail Improvement, Trail Management, Trail Comfort, and Trail Links. As well, eleven (11) trail improvement focus areas throughout the municipality. A total of 59 projects, impacting over 78 kilometers of trail, have been established. This series of proposed trail areas and associated projects, if approved, will have an impact on the capital planning and special projects in future Parks and Recreation budget requests. The overarching recommendations for this category are listed below.

Recommendation 1	The proposed trail projects as identified in the 2023 Trails Master Plan Update will be used as the blueprint for future trail planning, design, and implementation.
Recommendation 2	The trail projects as identified in the 2023 Trails Master Plan Update are to be adopted as a schedule as part of the City's Official Plan along with the necessary policy supports to ensure that the trail master plan recommendations are further supported at a higher policy level.
Recommendation 3	The trail project categorization should be adopted as the preferred approach that is used to identify, recommend, or plan for trail projects undertaken throughout the City as project and initiative implementation proceeds.
Recommendation 4	The trail projects will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine if there are any outstanding opportunities that require further consideration including opportunities noted through the trail plan update consultation process or otherwise.

Focus Area #2 – East Cameron Lake includes a project that recommends directing motorized use to the on-road by-pass along KL 121 during the summer months. This direction would prohibit motorized use of the trail between Garnet Graham Park and Northline Road between May and November. Motorized use would be permitted in this section during the winter season. This recommendation addresses the previous resolution of Council. By-law 2007-107 Consolidated Trails By-law will need to be reviewed and revised based on the recommendations within the TMPU.

Trail Design

This category refers to the consistent application of guidelines and standards to support the look and feel of various trail elements such as trail corridor classifications, signage and wayfinding, amenities, crossings, trailheads, and trail barrier features such as bridges. These guidelines and standards have been developed and recommended to guide design decision making and to ensure consistency throughout the municipality. They are meant to ensure Kawartha Lakes is utilizing best practices for creating and managing safe, enjoyable, accessible, and sustainable trail experiences. The overarching recommendations for this category are listed below.

Recommendation 1	The signage and wayfinding guidelines are to be reviewed and a comprehensive signage and wayfinding strategy is to be developed and implemented.
Recommendation 2	The trail classifications as identified in the 2023 Trails Master Plan Update are to be utilized as the primary guidance for trail design as projects proceed to implementation.
Recommendation 3	The trail standards are to be adopted as part of the City's infrastructure guidelines as part of the annual update process.
Recommendation 4	Trail amenities are to be implemented in a consistent manner throughout the municipality including new trails and trail improvements through the application of the amenity selection and implementation tool identified in the plan.
Recommendation 5	Where applicable, provincially accepted design guidelines and standards should take precedence over those included in the trail plan update including Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, TAC Guidelines and Ontario Traffic Manual Book 15.
Recommendation 6	Developers are to be provided with the Trails Master Plan as part of the Site Plan approval process to ensure design consistency of trails in place of parkland dedication.

As part of Trail Design – Recommendation 1, staff will incorporate the signage strategy when completing the work related to approved 2023 Special Project, Phase 1 VRT Signage Installation Lindsay to Kinmount.

Trail Education and Outreach

This category refers to the strategies, tactics, and programming that are designed and implemented with the intent of influencing the behaviours of those who live, work, and play within Kawartha Lakes. The intent is to more effectively communicate trail information, encourage participation and strike enthusiasm and interest in achieving and increasing recreational mobility. The overarching recommendations for this category are listed below.

Recommendation 1	Partnerships with key stakeholders and organizations should continue to be supported as part of enhanced community outreach.
Recommendation 2	Establish a trail stewardship program to support City staff with the implementation of the TMPU including trail programming, maintenance, and monitoring.
Recommendation 3	Parks and Recreation will ensure that online information regarding trails is up to date and relevant exploring trail user spotlights and community-based promotion.
Recommendation 4	Recommended education and outreach strategies should be reviewed and prioritized by the Parks and Recreation division with one educational initiative to be undertaken each year.

Parks and Recreation staff will collaborate with appropriate municipal staff to incorporate aspects of the TMPU into future documents and budgets. In addition to internal collaboration, staff would work with stakeholders to develop stewardship and outreach strategies.

Implementation and Management

This category refers to the various tools and tactics that are designed specifically for Kawartha Lakes to support staff and its partners with the day-to-day coordination of trail related projects, recommendations, and initiatives. It guides process and practice through appropriate capacity building and clear communication and coordination. The overarching recommendations for this category are listed below.

Recommendation 1	The Parks and Recreation Division will work with the Development Services Department and Engineering/ Corporate Assets Department to coordinate the implementation of the trails plan update with complementary projects such as the Active Transportation Master Plan.
Recommendation 2	The trail phasing and priorities will be reviewed on an annual basis to determine which projects are to proceed to implementation. Status updates and project recommendations will be summarized in an annual report to Council.
Recommendation 3	A dedicated staff person should be identified to support the implementation of the trail plan update starting with 1.0 FTE (full-time equivalent) and shifting to 1.5-2 FTE based on future assessment of need.
Recommendation 4	Signage and enforcement by Municipal Law Enforcement staff are to be enhanced in locations where there is restricted access by specific users.
Recommendation 5	Management agreements are to be developed for partnerships between the municipality and trail user organizations for trail management projects or where user specific design is implemented.
Recommendation 6	Land acquisition, encroachment, and/or easement requirements to accommodate new trail development or trail improvements are to be reviewed and studied as a project proceeds with implementation.

Parks and Recreation staff will collaborate with appropriate municipal staff to incorporate aspects of the TMPU into future documents and budgets. In addition to internal collaboration, staff would work with user groups to review, update and implement agreements.

Trail Costing and Funding

This category refers to the master plan level costing that aims to provide a preliminary assessment of the anticipated capital or operating costs of projects to facilitate implementation and management and the sources of monies that will be used to fund those costs. The overarching recommendations for this category are listed below.

Recommendation 1	Within the Parks and Recreation Division capital budget a line item of \$500,000 be identified for the implementation of trail projects in addition to exploring external funding opportunities i.e. federal, provincial, local, or private.
Recommendation 2	Within the Parks and Recreation Division operating budget a line item of \$50,000 be identified to facilitate the implementation of the trail related education and encouragement strategies with the potential to increase to \$100,000.
Recommendation 3	Within the Parks and Recreation Division operating budget, the line item for maintenance will be increased to \$200,000 with appropriate increases to the budget per annum based on kilometer implemented.
Recommendation 4	Operational costs are to be reviewed and refined on an annual basis to ensure that trail maintenance (seasonal and winter included) is appropriately supported to meet the expectations of the master plan update.
Recommendation 5	An annual review of external funding opportunities should be undertaken to explore potential sources of public funding based on the recommended sources as identified in the trails master plan update or additional sources that emerge following adoption.

Parks and Recreation staff will work with staff to incorporate identified resource increases to future budget programs. Staff will continue to investigate and leverage non-municipal and stakeholder funding to support TMPU projects and recommendations.

Maintenance and Enforcement

This category refers to the practices and protocols that are put in place to ensure that the trails are up to good working standard no matter the use or the season. It also identifies the methods and tools used to ensure that safe and appropriate use of the trail is achieved. The overarching recommendations for this category are listed below.

Recommendation 1	Use minimum maintenance practices as per Council's direction, with additional guidance to be provided on enhanced trail maintenance standards as part of the City's infrastructure guidelines.
Recommendation 2	For those trails where winter trail use is identified or the desire for winterized trail use has been identified, winter maintenance be undertaken in partnership with local organizations including plowing, signage updates and monitoring.
Recommendation 3	As part of a monitoring and evaluation process, municipal staff of the Parks and Recreation Division will coordinate meetings with key stakeholders and community members to inform trail evaluation and improvement at a minimum of once per annum.
Recommendation 4	Review the online reporting tool to ensure the maintenance issue portal can accommodate specific trail locations and issues.
Recommendation 5	An annual or bi-annual evaluation is to be undertaken of the status and condition of the trails as per the template identified in the Trails Master Plan Update. Evaluations are to be completed in the summer.
Recommendation 6	Community engagement pertaining to public perception of implementation successes and improvements to be undertaken bi-annually through community surveys.
Recommendation 7	GIS database and implementation tools will be adopted by staff to manage the implementation of the trail projects and used to inform annual reporting.
Recommendation 8	A formalized trail enforcement program should be developed and updated in City by-laws with a dedicated Enforcement Complaint form to be prepared for trail issues.

Parks and Recreation staff will identify the impact on resources based on any potential changes to service levels and incorporate into future budget and work plan programs.

A robust planning process was undertaken by municipal staff, partners, and the consulting team from CIMA+ that has resulted in a Trails Master Plan that has been re-envisioned and reframed to provide the tools, tactics, and targets to make a shift towards greater recreational mobility. The TMPU sets a timeline of 20+ years and provides the flexibility to use the policies, processes, guidelines and tools to adapt to anticipated or unanticipated growth and changes. The level of detail and technical consideration that was incorporated into the development of the TMPU is further reinforced by the extensive engagement with stakeholders, municipal staff, community members and council representatives that occurred. The outcomes of the TMPU are truly shaped by and developed for the residents and visitors of Kawartha Lakes.

Other Alternatives Considered:

The Trails Master Plan Update has been developed to guide Council and municipal staff to make informed decisions based on standard policies, processes, guidelines and tools in the future. Recommendations identified within the final report are based on input from the public, stakeholders, staff and council members. While it is understood that differences of opinion may arise regarding individual recommendations, the TMPU provides a framework for discussion and ultimately any specific decision, direction or expenditure will require the approval of Council. Therefore, staff recommend that Council endorse the document.

Council could choose not to endorse the Trails Master Plan Update – Final Report however this is not recommended by staff as this would result in not having an overarching document or plan to guide future trail decision-making or updated policies and by-laws to govern trail use.

Alignment to Strategic Priorities

This report aligns with the strategic priorities within the 2020-2023 Kawartha Lakes Strategic Plan of:

1. An Exceptional Quality of Life
2. Good Government
3. A Vibrant and Growing Economy

Financial/Operation Impacts:

The recommendations related to this report have no associated direct impact to the current budget. As future initiatives and projects are planned the resource impacts will be identified and requested through the appropriate process.

Servicing Implications:

NA

Consultations:

Community Working Group

Community Engagement through Jump In

Development Services Department

Attachments:

Appendix A – Trails Master Plan Update – Final Document (2023)



B001383_Kawartha
Trails Update Master

Appendix B – Kawartha Lakes Trails Master Plan Update – Project Summary and Recommendations Overview (2022)



B001383_KLTMPU_R
Recommendation Pre

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