TO: Council
FROM: Michael Benner
DATE: July 3, 2019
REPORT: PL.19.57
SUBJECT: Trails Master Plan - Initial Draft

RECOMMENDATION:
That Council receive staff report PL.19.57 for information purposes; and That Council authorize staff to proceed with Public Input related to the Draft Trails Master Plan.

BACKGROUND AND ANALYSIS:

With its abundant natural features, stunning vistas, attractive villages and quiet agricultural and rural areas, the Municipality of Grey Highlands is positioned to be one of Ontario’s premier adventure tourism and resource based recreational activity centres. Many forms of trail systems traverse the municipality from multi-use stone dust trails associated with former rail lands to naturalized trails following the Niagara Escarpment and Bruce trail to local footpaths within our villages and hamlets. As the municipality continues to grow, demands on our existing trails will continue to grow as well as the need for to develop new trail connections throughout the municipality.

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with a draft Trails Master Plan for their consideration, and to seek Council direction on the process of finalizing and adopting this Plan as an important policy document.
A copy of the Draft Trails Master Plan is attached as Appendix "1" to this report.

OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Purpose of the Study

The Municipality of Grey Highlands recognizes the important role of parks, open space and trails in contributing to social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being, enhancing quality of life, and creating an attractive and desirable place to live. Therefore, it is a key objective of this Plan is to ensure that the protection and enhancement of existing trail systems is supported by the municipality, and that all
opportunities for new trail systems are explored and recognized as a recreational resource for local residents, tourists and future generations.

**Scope of the Plan**

The Plan includes an analysis of the benefits and impacts of trails on the municipality of Grey Highlands and identifies guidelines and opportunities for the development of a Trails network within the municipality. A focus of the Plan is linking the parks and trails system through the provision of new trails and parklands, where appropriate, and the development of new trail-to-trail connections. To this end, although the Plan does provide an inventory of known trail systems, it focuses more on trail design and the principles behind future trail and linkage priorities.

This Plan does not address the provision of recreation facilities and related service delivery and programming, which are anticipated to be dealt with through the preparation of a Recreation Master Plan.

**Study Area**

The study area for the Trails Master Plan generally encompasses the entire Municipality of Grey Highlands but initially focuses on the settlement areas of Markdale and Flesherton as these communities are experiencing the greatest growth pressures at the time of the authoring of this study. Other areas within the municipality will be reviewed as necessary and incorporated into this Study through future amendments.

The Plan also looks beyond the boundaries of Grey Highlands for the purposes of determining potential trail linkages to adjacent municipalities and connections to the County trail systems and the Niagara Escarpment Trail system.

**Contents of the Plan**

The following components are included in the Draft Trails Master Plan:

Community Profile of the Grey Highlands

The socio-demographic characteristics of Grey Highlands play a significant role in determining current and long-range trail/linkage requirements. The implications of the identified trends on trails planning in Grey Highlands are summarized in this section. This analysis is derived from the 2016 census data provided by Statistics Canada and from the County of Grey Draft Official Plan.

Trends and Benefits of Trails

By understanding trends that are related to demographics, participation, and facility development, changes in the demand for trails can be anticipated.

Trail Planning Principles
This section provides overall goals, vision and objectives that should be addressed when planning new trails and linkages.

Trail Design Guidelines

This section is a compilation of design guidelines that cover a wide range of conditions that will typically be encountered during the construction of the municipal trail network system.

Existing Trails Systems

This section provides a summary of existing known trails within and linking to the municipality.

Future Trail Systems and Linkages

A focus of the Plan is linking the municipality’s existing parks and trails system through the provision of new trails and parklands, where appropriate, and the development of new trail-to-trail connections. This section provides general guidelines for the provision of new trail system and linkages.

Where trail systems are identified, appropriate mapping and/or descriptions will be included in Appendix “A” to this Plan. It is intended that Appendix “A” will be further developed through the inclusion of new trail systems without the need to amend the parent Plan.

Summary and Next Steps

The Trails Master Plan is intended as a guideline for the maintenance of and development of new trails and linkages within the municipality. This document, once approved by Council, will be referenced in the municipality’s Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw when addressing trails from a land use planning perspective. It is also anticipated that other municipal departments, such as Community Development, will utilize the Plan in the design construction and maintenance of trails.

It should be noted that the County is also preparing a Trails Master Plan that will focus on the County’s overall trail and cycling network. Municipal planning staff have, and will continue to be, involved in this initiative, and will incorporate County trail initiatives into our own Plan when appropriate.

Further, given the local interest in trails and Active Transportation, staff suggest providing the Trails Master Plan for public review and input over the summer months through the Connect Grey Highlands website.

Approved By: Michael Benner, Director of Planning

Status: Approved - 20 Jun 2019
# Grey Highlands Trails Master Plan

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Municipality of Grey Highlands Trails Master Plan

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1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The Municipality of Grey Highlands recognizes the important role of parks, open space and trails in contributing to social, cultural, environmental and economic well-being, enhancing quality of life, and creating an attractive and desirable place to live.

Therefore, it is a key objective of this Plan is to ensure that the protection and enhancement of existing trail systems is supported by the municipality, and that all opportunities for new trail systems are explored and recognized as a recreational resource for local residents, tourists and future generations.

Scope of the Plan

The Plan includes an analysis of the benefits and impacts of trails on the municipality of Grey Highlands and identifies guidelines and opportunities for the development of a Trails network within the municipality. A focus of the Plan is linking the parks and trails system through the provision of new trails and parklands, where appropriate, and the development of new trail-to-trail connections.

This Plan does not address the provision of recreation facilities and related service delivery and programming, which are anticipated to be dealt with through the preparation of a Recreation Master Plan.

Study Area

The study area for the Trails Master Plan generally encompasses the entire Municipality of Grey Highlands but initially focuses on the settlement areas of Markdale and Flesherton as these communities are experiencing the greatest growth pressures at the time of the authoring of this study. Other areas within the municipality will be reviewed as necessary and incorporated into this Study through future amendments.

The Plan also looks beyond the boundaries of Grey Highlands for the purposes of determining potential trail linkages to adjacent municipalities and connections to the County trail systems and the Niagara Escarpment Trail system.
2 COMMUNITY PROFILE

Community Profile of the Grey Highlands

The socio-demographic characteristics of Grey Highlands play a significant role in determining current and long-range trail/linkage requirements. The implications of the identified trends on trails planning in Grey Highlands are summarized in this section. This analysis is derived from the 2016 census data provided by Statistics Canada and from the County of Grey Draft Official Plan.

Statistics Canada reports that in 2016, the enumerated population of Grey Highlands was 9,804, which represents an increase of 3.0% from the 2011 population of 9,520. This compares to the provincial average of 4.6% and the national average of 5.0% population growth.

The percentage of Grey Highlands residents in 2016 between the ages of 15 and 64 was approximately 61% of the overall population, down from approximately 64% in 2006. Children aged 0 to 14 represented 16% of the populations and persons aged 65 and over represented 22% of the total population1.

In 2016 the average age in the Grey Highlands was 44 which is slightly older than Ontario at 411. This is likely due to the older rural population generally found in Grey County2. Be that as it may, youth and families continue to be a strong and important segment of the municipality’s population in planning for recreation needs. Accordingly, a balanced approach to trail planning, recognizing the needs of all age groups, is necessary.

Seasonal residents significantly increase the population of the municipality through the summer months. Seasonal populations add to the demand for parks and trails during the peak usage period (late spring to early fall).

In addition to seasonal residents, the Town’s various natural settings draws many visitors from other areas in the province. Again, this adds to the demand for parks and trails during the peak usage periods.

Parks, open spaces and trails and the programming of those spaces are part of what the municipality is marketing to tourists. In marketing Grey Highlands as a tourism destination, a balance between the needs of local residents and visitors will also need to be maintained.

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1 Statistics Canada 2016 Census
2 2016 County of Grey Draft Official Plan
3 TRENDS AND BENEFITS OF TRAILS

Trends Affecting the Demand for Trails

This table provides a summary of the major trends which are influencing the demand for municipal trails facilities and services.

By understanding trends that are related to demographics, participation, and facility development, changes in the demand for trails can be anticipated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Participation Rate</th>
<th>Annual Growth Rate (1998 to 2001)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Walking</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational Cycling</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snowmobiling</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horseback Riding</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ATV/Dirt Bike Users</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Usage trends in existing trail systems across the province strongly favour recreational walking, cycling and hiking; typically referred to as “Active Transportation”. Non-active transportation uses (i.e. snowmobiling, ATV/dirt bike usage and horseback riding) are also connected with trail use but on a more regional scale. Accordingly, the Municipality of Grey Highlands trails should primarily focus on providing venues related to active transportation (walking, hiking and cycling).

The emphasis placed on more active-transportation usage trends is supported by the Ontario Trails Strategy. This long-term plan, prepared in 2006 as part of the Active 2010 Strategy, establishes strategic directions to assist in the planning, management, promotion, and use of trails in Ontario, and was developed in collaboration with other Provincial ministries and a wide range of stakeholders.

The Ontario Trails Strategy identifies a number of potential benefits to communities that can be realized through trails and trail-related activities. These include:

The Benefits of a Trails System

3.1.1 Support for Active Living

- Having access to trails encourages an active lifestyle. Health benefits are afforded to a wide range of users including the physically active as well as the elderly, children and youth, and persons with disabilities.

- With many residents experiencing increasingly busy lives, they are more encouraged to seek fitness opportunities through access to unstructured recreation activities, such as walking, cycling and jogging, all of which are well suited to outdoor trails.
o As an example, 30 minutes of brisk daily walking is all that is needed for improved fitness levels, and health benefits.\(^3\)

### 3.1.2 Social Benefits
- Trails can help build the social fabric of a community, physically connecting neighbourhoods and outlying communities together, and encouraging casual interactions. The Municipality of Grey Highlands is considered to be a “community of communities. As such, wherever possible, trail systems will be developed to strengthen the ties between communities for the purposes of Community Health; Economic Prosperity; and Environmental Well-being. Key to this program is the development of a trails network that will build on a well-developed framework of local and regional trails.

- By linking shopping, entertainment, workplaces, and parks, trails can help to structure compact neighbourhoods that promote active transportation, and contribute to economically and environmentally sustainable, and liveable communities.

- Trails offer low cost, unstructured recreation that can be enjoyed in solitude, by families, and as group activities.

- Trails are available to all ages and the associated activities (e.g., bird watching, walking, cycling, cross-country skiing, etc.) can be relatively inexpensive in comparison to other recreation activities that have user fees and/or require expensive equipment.

- With appropriate design, most urban trails can be made physically accessible to a wide range of skills and abilities.

- Many trails can be used in all seasons, through a variety of activities.

### 3.1.3 Environmental Benefits
- Trails support both urban and rural recreational lifestyles and can support broader environmental and ecological objectives through the protection of greenspace corridors.

- By rationalizing and re-routing random and informal paths, trails can serve to keep users away from sensitive environmental areas.

- The use of trail maps and interpretive signage can help to enhance appreciation and awareness of ecology and promote stewardship.

\(^3\) Active Living 2010 – a program of the Government of Ontario
3.1.4 Economic and Tourism Benefits

- As one of the most highly requested recreational amenities, trails promote a high quality of life for communities and indicate a desirable place to both live and operate a business.

- Trails can be used to connect key destinations such as natural parks, cultural heritage features, or other community amenities and in doing so can encourage visitation by both local residents and tourists.

- Trails can create both direct jobs through construction as well as indirect jobs, relating to tourism and visitation. This might include restaurants, lodging, food and beverage and other expenses.

- Many trail users purchase local goods to support their trail activities, e.g., mountain bikes, jogging gear, hiking shoes, etc. These purchases contribute to the local economy through jobs and taxes.

- Research has indicated that proximity to trails contributes to real estate values, and properties close to or adjacent to trails are often highly marketable.
4 TRAIL PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Trail Planning Principles
The Ontario Trails Strategy identifies a Vision, Goals and Values for the future of a trails network in Ontario, as follows:

A world class system of diversified trails planned and used in an environmentally responsible manner, that enhances the health and prosperity of all Ontarions.

- A world class system: The trails community will work together effectively.
- Diversified trails across Ontario: Trails in all parts of Ontario will meet the needs of varied users.
- Environmentally responsible: Trails will be planned and used in a manner that preserves and appreciates the environment.
- Enhanced Quality of life: Trail use will help improve the health and prosperity of all Ontarions.

For the Grey Highlands this means that our Trail System will be:

- Planned: Trails will be considered an integral component of all community planning and development.
- Connected: Trails will serve to connect the varied hamlets, villages and special places of the Grey Highlands, both internally and externally, and will link key destinations.
- Diverse: The trail system will be designed to appeal to a wide range of users and interests.
- Inspiring: Trails will promote and encourage use and enjoyment of the municipality’s natural, cultural and recreational features.
- Accessible: The trail system will provide opportunities for four-season use and will include a core network of trails that are accessible to people of all ages and abilities.
- Safe and Inviting: Safety, security, and user comfort will be considered in the design and management of the trail system.
- Sustainable: The trail system will be developed and managed in a manner that preserves the environment, is financially responsible, and encourages opportunities for partnership and stewardship.
5 TRAIL DESIGN GUIDELINES

Trail Design Details
This section is a compilation of design guidelines that cover a wide range of conditions that will typically be encountered during the construction of the municipal trail network system. Although generic in nature, critical dimensions and standards, where they exist, are noted. It should be noted, however, that at the time each portion of the network is implemented, detailed design studies would be required so that the intent of the relevant details can be applied in response to the site-specific conditions.

5.1.1 Trail Surfacing
Typical multi-use trails should be designed with a minimum width of 3 metres to comfortably accommodate users passing each other, whether on foot or on bicycle. It is recommended that the ultimate surface treatment for main trail loops be stone dust or granite screenings. A 150mm bed of compacted fines is useable by the widest range of trail user groups and it can be easily re-graded as part of the maintenance of the trail bed. Occasional “topping up” of the base may be necessary.

Secondary linking trails should be stone dust screenings or wood chips in keeping with the rural or natural environment through which the trail passes. Materials of fine particle size create a smooth solid surface that all trail users can negotiate with confidence. These materials are generally appropriate in rural areas where it is in keeping with rural character of traditional country lanes and routes.
5.1.2 Roadway Crossings
The design of roadway crossings should consider the following:

- development and maintenance of open sightlines to the road (at least 60 meters back from high speed roads and 30 meters back from low speed roads) at each crossing point;
- proper lockable gates or other trail barriers to prevent access by non-permitted uses where applicable;
- proper signing along the roadway to alert motorists to the trail crossing;
- proper signing along the trail to alert trail users of the upcoming roadway crossing;
- alignment of the crossing point to achieve as close to possible a perpendicular crossing of the roadway to make the crossing route direct and minimize the time that trail users are in the traveled portion of the roadway, and sufficient space on either side of the road for staging while waiting for traffic to clear.
- Where appropriate, traffic lights should be installed to regulate crossings and ensure the safety of both motorists and trail users.

5.1.3 Farm and Private Road Crossings
The design of farm and private road crossings should consider the following:

- development and maintenance of open sightlines to the road or farm lane;
- proper lockable trail barriers to prevent access by nonpermitted uses and are opened for service and/or emergency vehicles, except on carriage trails where gates are not required;
- proper signing along the trail to alert trail users of the upcoming crossing, and alignment of the crossing point to achieve as close to possible a perpendicular crossing of the roadway to make the crossing route direct and minimize the time that trail users are in the traveled portion of the roadway.

5.1.4 Bridges
Wherever possible, at-grade crossings are recommended. In the instance that an existing bridge is updated for trail use it must be firm and steady. Decking boards must be flat, with 25mm maximum spacing for drainage and well fastened. Heavy rough-cut deck boards are recommended. The minimum recommended bearing capacity is 5 tons or greater. Where the bridge is 600mm or more above the ground, longitudinal barriers must be constructed. It is recommended that each bridge be investigated by a qualified professional to ensure structural stability.
5.1.5 Signage Program

A hierarchy of trail signs should be included as a key element to any trail system. Proper implementation will increase ease of way finding for users, and serve to educate them on trail etiquette, deterring trespassing and increasing awareness of the potential sensitivities of the area that they are visiting. This hierarchy should include:

- **Trailhead Staging area/orientation signing** typically located at staging areas and major trail nodes. It provides orientation to the trail system through mapping and interpretive information. Larger in size, trailhead staging area signs are visible from a distance, and for the passing motorist can be used as a trail “identifier”;

- **Trail node signs** are typically located at key trail intersections. Smaller in size and stature than trailhead staging area signs, they can be used for way finding throughout the system. In key locations, trail node signs can be used to display interpretive information;

- **Trail directional signs** should be located at every trail intersection to cue trail users for destinations and in some cases, distances to destinations. Directional signs typically are smaller and simpler in design than trail node or trailhead staging area signs;

- **Trail marker signs** should be located at regular intervals e.g. 500-1000m along the trail. The purpose of trail marker signs is to provide a simple visual message to users that they are still on the route. In many cases, trail marker signs take the form of a bollard with the trail logo and distance marker clearly displayed;

- **Interpretive signs** should be highly graphic, easy to read, and wheelchair accessible. Bollards may not be appropriate where interpretive information is creatively supplemented with photos, maps and other graphics due to their small size. In these circumstances, a signboard constructed of similar materials and featuring standard trail sign color palette, logo and symbols will be ideal. Interpretive signs may be located at points-of-interest such as historical features (i.e. abandoned railway buildings) and natural features (i.e. Beaver River).

- The design and construction of the trail signing system should incorporate a “family” of design elements, materials and techniques. The use of similar materials and design elements will become immediately recognizable by the trail user. Consistent use of the trail logo on all of the signage elements is a strong identifier and unifier. It is recommended that recognizable traffic control signs be used, as are found in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices, Ontario 1996 Ontario Bikeways Planning and Design Guidelines, and TAC guidelines, and OFSC signage manual.
5.1.6 On-road Routes and Linkages
Where public land (other than the road right-of-way) is not available and access agreements for trails on private lands are not feasible, it is necessary to provide connecting links using the existing road network.

There is legislation pertaining to the operation of bicycles on-roadways and there is a well-established set of guidelines and standards for the development of on-road cycling facilities. It is not widely known that bicycles are designated as a vehicle under the Highway Traffic Act (HTA) and as such are required to obey all of the same rules and regulations as automobiles when being operated on a public roadway. The Ministry of Transportation (MTO) and the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC) have developed standards for the design of on-road facilities and signing for on-road-bike system.

5.1.7 Trail Access Points
The existing and proposed trail network in Grey Highlands can and will be able to be accessed at many different locations. This section provides the key features that should be incorporated into the design of major staging areas.

Major staging areas are generally proposed for important community destinations, and typically incorporate the following elements:

• parking (the number of spaces required should relate to the anticipated level of use for the staging area and the design should provide the flexibility to increase the number of spaces if the demand exceeds the anticipated level);
• easy access to and from the trail system;
• ample room to load and unload equipment such as bicycles or canoes (space requirement will vary depending on permitted trail uses);
• secure bicycle parking facilities;
• waste receptacles;
• lighting (may or may not be included, depending on location and site context);
• signing (including trail directional signing and mapping/interpretive signing so that trail users can plan their journey-major and minor staging area);
• drinking water and washrooms (typically at major staging areas only);
• seating and or picnic/informal activity space (more often associated with a major staging area that includes an open gathering space) and,
• a food concession and/or other entrepreneurial facilities, either publicly or privately owned and operated (i.e. canoe rentals, bicycle rentals) may also be available, depending on the size and setting for the major staging area.
5.1.8 Trail Themes
The Town of Grey Highlands is a large and diverse community with many cultural, natural and historical resources. These elements lend a certain identity to different destination points and neighbourhoods. Developing a trail with a particular theme adds a sense of identity to individual trails or loops and lends unique character to the trail network as a whole. It also provides an additional opportunity and incentive for neighbourhood associations, the provincial government, conservation authorities or public interest groups to become involved as partners in developing and maintaining the trails.

Some of the options that are available with regards to theming include:
- Adding a distinct trail name or additional logo plate while maintaining other common design elements of the signs;
- Creating neighbourhood/district gateway nodes in key locations at the edges of neighbourhoods;
- Creating distinct interpretive themes for different trails. Possible themes may include themes such as the history of the community, the formation of the beaver valley, flora and fauna unique to a particular area, or the historic architecture of a particular neighbourhood.

6 THE TRAIL SYSTEM

Existing Trails

The following provides a brief description of the various trail systems located within the municipality of Grey Highlands. These trails represent a mix of difficulty levels and lengths and travel through spectacular terrain, forests and meadows.

The Bruce Trail
The Bruce Trail is Canada’s oldest and longest marked footpath. It provides the only continuous public access to the magnificent Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. Running along the Escarpment from Niagara to Tobermory, it spans more than 890 km of main Trail and over 400 km of associated side trails. Many are managed by either the Bruce Trail Association, local Conservation Authorities, Grey County and/or the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests.
Eugenia Falls
Situated in the Village of Eugenia, Eugenia Falls Conservation Area encompasses 23 hectares of Niagara Escarpment, river valley and upland forests.

Feversham Gorge
1.5 km hiking trail leads off to lookout station and stairs along the edge of the gorge. Facilities include washrooms, picnic tables and parking.

Flesherton Forest
The Flesherton Forest has a figure 8 loop trail through an easy walking area that features a stream, hardwood and cedar forest, ferns, open views and old meadows. The Forest is accessible at the end of Highland Dr, past the Arena, in a Grey Sauble Conservation Management Area.
Grey County CP Rail Trail
This multi-use trail is 77 km and begins at East Bayshore Road in Owen Sound and provides good views of Georgian Bay as the trail climbs in elevation and follows a wide arc east of the city and runs parallel to Highway 6 to Chatsworth. The trail surface is stone dusted from Owen Sound to Holland Centre and then turns to coarse gravel from Holland Centre to Dundalk. The portion from Holland Centre to Dundalk is a rougher trail and allows for ATV use and would best be suited for mountain bikes only.

Grey County Forests
Grey County manages and owns 8 thousand acres of forest. In recent years, the county has been focusing on developing and maintaining extensive trail systems across these vast lands. While these trails are also used for snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and cycling, they remain popular with hikers. Trails within these managed forests offer great beginner and family-friendly hiking and plenty of wildlife viewing opportunities.

Hoggs Falls
Just outside of Flesherton is the picturesque Hoggs Falls. Featuring picnic area, washrooms, scenic tour, trail access and parking.
**Kimberly Forest Trails**
Stretching for close to 1,000 acres and nearly two and a half kilometers along the west side of the Beaver Valley, the Kimberley Forest extends north from the Beaver Valley Ski Club nearly to the former Talisman Ski Resort. For the most part, this large tract of public land extends up the escarpment from the Beaver River in the valley west to the 7th Line. These lands are jointly owned and managed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and the Bruce Trail Conservancy.
7 FUTURE TRAIL SYSTEMS and LINKAGES

As noted above, a focus of the Plan is linking the municipality’s existing parks and trails system through the provision of new trails and parklands, where appropriate, and the development of new trail-to-trail connections. This section provides general guidelines for the provision of new trail system and linkages.

Where trail systems are identified, appropriate mapping and/or descriptions will be included in Appendix “A” to this Plan. It is intended that Appendix “A” will be further developed through the inclusion of new trail systems without the need to amend the parent Plan.

Priorities for New Trail Systems
Over the long term when establishing priorities for new trail construction or improvements there are a number of factors that should be considered, including (in no order of priority):

- timing of new development or road improvements
- visibility and profile of the trail segment;
- status of approvals and ease of construction;
- public and political support;
- contribution to existing route connectivity;
- external partnerships and funding opportunities, such as grant programs; and,
- available capital budgets.

Phasing of New Trail Systems
The Trails Master Plan is considered to be a 10-year plan with phased implementation of the following key elements:

- The focus of developing capital fund reserves for trails development initiatives;
- Developing a new multi-use trail loop for the Markdale settlement area as a primary connection and destination for residents and visitors. This system will be partially developed by local land development groups;
- Completing trail loops in Flesherton and Euguenia as those communities experience growth. Some of these trails are expected to proceed in tandem with new development and, therefore, may occur out of sequence with identified priorities;
- Working with the Kimberley Forest Committee and other stakeholders to refine and further develop the existing trail network and linkages in the Kimberley Forest.
• Other initiatives which may be funded from sources other than the trails development capital budget include:
  o Identification and signing of cycling/walking routes that complete the trail loops;
  o Developing a trails map/brochure for marketing of the existing trail system, with periodic updates as major trails initiatives are accomplished;
  o Improvements to signage on the existing trail system, as needed, e.g. directional, trail entrance marking. As this is an ongoing matter, a small annual budget should be considered to address this need.

Project Costs and Funding

Many of the existing trail systems within the municipality have been developed by government agencies, associations, and local not-for-profit stakeholder groups. Moving forward, new trail systems and connections will need to be developed by the municipality and local development groups, through the municipality’s development approval process, and as systems and linkages are identified. The municipality collects Parkland Dedication fees and other budgetary items that can be placed in a reserve program for trail development and maintenance over time.

Additionally, Not-for-profit community organizations have access to other sources such as government or foundation grants or corporate funds that are not available directly to municipalities. Accordingly, the continued involvement of local trail organizations and enthusiasts in trails development should be encouraged. Most available programs require some co-payment from the municipality, and grants typically serve to boost, rather than replace municipal contributions. As this is a 10-year plan, and grant opportunities change on a frequent basis, the municipality should continue to monitor potential government and foundation grants programs for external funding opportunities and potential sponsors.
A.1. The Markdale Loop

The intent of the Markdale Loop is to develop a trails and linkages system that connects the existing Markdale community and downtown area with new residential development being developed on the periphery of the community.

Key components of the trail system will include:

- A new trail system and linkages through the Devonleigh Homes and Dimakos properties connecting to new development areas to the east and west. This trail system will be built as part of the residential development proposed for these sites;
- Linkages and sidewalk extensions through Uplands Drive and Clungston Drive connecting the Devonleigh Homes property to the existing commercial development along Highway 10;
- A new trail system connecting the Grey Gables and new Hospital lands with the County of Grey’s CP Rail Trail and an existing trail located opposite Terra Drive on the south side of Grey Road 12;
- A new linkage along Terra Drive connecting to Rotary Park;
- A new trail system connecting Rotary Park to the County of Grey CP Rail Trail following the Rocky Saugeen River and connecting eastward to Highway 10; and
- A new trail system following the Rocky Saugeen River and tributaries across the Markdale Golf and Curling Club lands to the Markdale Cemetery connecting back into the Dimakos and Devonleigh Trail system to complete the Markdale Loop.